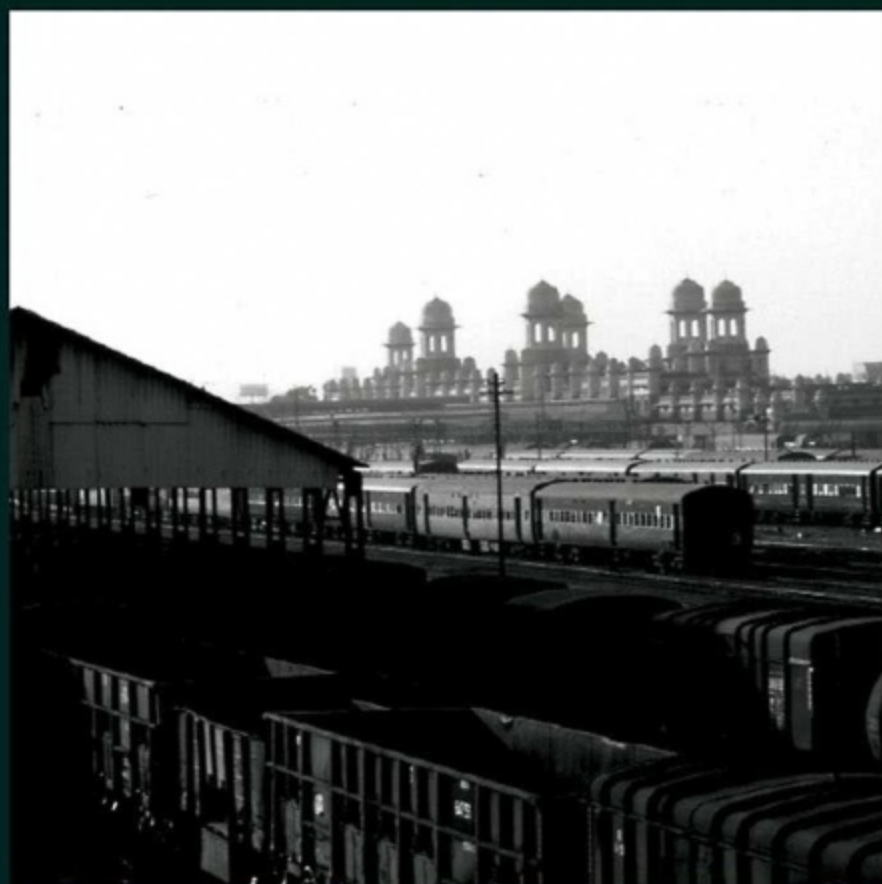


Edited by P. Scriver & V. Prakash

Colonial Modernities

Building, Dwelling and Architecture
in British India and Ceylon



Colonial Modernities

Colonial Modernities brings together a selection of cutting-edge historical essays on architecture and building in colonial India and Ceylon. Utilizing interdisciplinary frameworks drawn from architectural and planning history, cultural studies and postcolonial critical inquiry, these essays offer novel interpretations of not only iconic public buildings, but also institutional and domestic spaces and the fabric of the built environment – the everyday architecture of colonial South Asia.

Engaging new archival sources to work close to the grain of specific cases, these essays collectively explore ways in which designing and building practices served to construct the highly contested and hybridized social spaces and practices of the colonial-modern world. Each individual essay is a distinct case study, offering an in-depth examination of a particular aspect of colonial architecture, such as the architectural work of the Public Works Department, or a particular building history such as the reuse of an old Mughal tomb as a residence for colonial officials.

Of key interest to lecturers, researchers and students in the disciplines of architecture, urban design and planning, human geography and sociology, cultural and postcolonial studies as well as South Asian history, this is one of the first books to study colonial architecture not in terms of formal categories, but specifically through social, cultural and political frameworks. As such it is one of the first attempts to grapple with the complex scenes of colonial-modern India and Ceylon in a manner that offers new insights into the material legacies of previous colonial constructions in the contemporary postcolonial culture of the Indian subcontinent.

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**Edited by Peter Scriver and
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Part I

Frames of Discourse

Chapter 1: Between Materiality and Representation

Framing an Architectural Critique of Colonial South Asia

Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash

Along with the English language, and the colonial legal and administrative institutions in which it has remained enshrined, the buildings of British India and Ceylon are arguably among the most tangible and enduring legacies of the European colonization of South Asia. The material evidence of this is ubiquitous. At one end of the architectural spectrum there are the bungalows, barracks, institutional and technical infrastructure originally built to accommodate the everyday operations of the colonial administration and the droves of both “native” and “European” employees that served in its civilian and military branches. Countless examples of these humble structures are still in use today, particularly in smaller towns and settlements, where time and familiarity have woven them into the local fabric as if they had emerged from vernacular building traditions (Figures 1.1–1.5).



Figure 1.1
Bungalow, Civil Lines,
Allahabad



Figure 1.2
Barracks, Fort George,
Madras (Chennai).



Figure 1.3
General Hospital, Benares
(Varanasi).

At the other end of the spectrum are the monumental architectural and urban legacies of imperialism, none so conspicuous as the capitol complex and ceremonial vistas designed by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker for Imperial New Delhi (Figure 1.6). Prized by politicians and preservationists alike, the spectacular stone structures of “Lutyens’ Delhi” continue to be the seat of government, and to represent the ideology of a paternalistic power embodied in centralized authority as intended by the former colonial regime.

In recent scholarship, the export to colonial India of the architectural forms and debates of “modern” Britain, and its ideological economy, have been relatively

Figure 1.4
Police substation, Mhow,
Madya Pradesh.



Figure 1.5
Peon quarters, Ajmer,
Rajasthan.



well studied. However, the actual building of this colonial architecture and its reception and inhabitation in the colonial-modern context have not received the equivalent attention required to fully appreciate the significance of this built legacy. Indeed, as the essays collected in the present volume explore, the building scene of colonial South Asia was not just a provincial theatre for the playing out of metropolitan ideas and fashions. It was a particularly distant stage on which representations of the modernity associated with the European imperial core – no matter how stilted a caricature – could assume a self-important authenticity merely by contrast to local practice. But imperial ideals of stability and purpose belied the progressively



Figure 1.6
Central Secretariat Blocks
and Viceroy's House
(Rashtrapati Bhavan,
today), from Central
Vista, Kingsway
(Rajpath), New Delhi.

shifting social and political realities of colonial-modernity. In complex and often contradictory ways, the architectural and engineering hubris of modern Britain was engaged in and mediated by the peculiar theatrics of the colonial-modern situation. In the process, the cultural norms, aspirations and delusions of both the colonizers and the colonized were materially and symbolically embodied in the walls and spaces of their buildings. In turn these buildings framed their inhabitants in specific ways. In other words, the buildings – and, therefore, “the building” – of British India and Ceylon are not only critical parts of their respective colonial histories, but also particularly felicitous frames of inquiry through which those histories can be interpreted critically.

Whilst interpreting the roles of building and dwelling in processes of cultural construction and re-production, the present essays also underscore the creative implications of architecture within colonial social histories. The walls and fences of the built environment were among the most concrete and explicit means by which colonial administrations attempted to divide and rule. But buildings also served to define and frame “in-between” spaces within the colonial social field – places of cultural contact and intersection where hybridity and innovation were enabled. Colonial architecture and building comprised a framework in which the values and identities of the new colonial-modern social classes that emerged under colonial rule found form.

THE IN-BETWEEN-NESS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL FRAME

A brief look at the way architecture is engaged in a tragicomic novel about cross-cultural hybridity in colonial-modern India will help illuminate the inventiveness inherent in the schizoid nature of “in-between” spaces. Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* begins in the early years of the twentieth century in what is described as a “grand old mansion in the traditional style ... set in a rich man's

paradise of tropical foliage.”¹ This is the estate of the da Gama clan, the wealthy South Indian Christian spice merchants who are the protagonists of the tale. With Rushdie’s fleeting description of the syncretistic building style of the steamy coconut-lined coast of tropical South India we are drawn into the world of colonial nostalgia and cross-cultural invention. Sequestered on a private island in the balmy harbor of colonial Cochin, the labyrinthine house and gardens are an Edenic microcosm of invented traditions and hybrid constructions, a lost world of colonial cultural miscegenation. One imagines Tagore’s *Shantiniketan*, or the Shahibaug estate of the Sarabhais of Ahmedabad. The Cinnamon Gardens mansions of colonial Colombo that Anoma Pieris explores in her contribution to the present volume offer another image, stylistically and climatically closer to Rushdie’s South Indian setting – a colonial-modern idiom derived and elaborated, as Pieris describes, from the same hybrid distillation of Portuguese, Dutch and indigenous vernacular building forms that would later inspire the romantic regionalist designs of architects in post-independence Sri Lanka.

Early in the story the rhetorical function of the old da Gama house and its grounds is brilliantly exploited in an incidental vignette in which Rushdie teases the architecturally informed reader with an apocryphal episode in the hagiography of modern architecture:

Francisco da Gama came home one day with an impossibly young and suspiciously winsome Frenchman, a certain M. Charles Jeanneret, who put on the airs of an architectural genius even though he was barely twenty years old. Before [Francisco’s wife] could blink, her gullible husband had commissioned the jackanapes to build not one but two new houses in her precious gardens. And what crazy structures they turned out to be! – The one a strange angular slabby affair in which the garden penetrated the interior space so thoroughly that it was often hard to say whether one was in or out of doors, and the furniture looked like something made for a hospital or a geometry class ...; the other a wood and paper house of cards – “after the style Japanese,” he told [her] – a flimsy fire-trap whose walls were sliding parchment screens ... Worse still [she] soon discovered that once these madhouses were ready her husband frequently tired of their beautiful home, would smack his hand on the breakfast table and announce they were “moving East” or “going West”; whereupon the whole household had no choice but to move lock, stock and barrel into one of the Frenchman’s follies ... And after a few weeks, they moved again.²

This vignette provides a wonderfully wry example of how architecture might have “performed,” so to speak, in the process of colonial-modern cultural construction. Through contrasting architectures, Rushdie represents the binary opposition that is perceived to be inherent in the characters’ cross-cultural pedigree. The architectural follies are caricatures of “East” and “West” that represent entire cultural worlds. Through the narrative juxtaposition of these absurd but materially and symbolically tangible frames of reference, the reader is able to understand something of the cross-cultural predicament. Framed in this way it is, quite literally, an existential quandary. The characters remain schizophrenically unsettled in these alternative architectures, perennially shuttling from folly to folly, with periodic

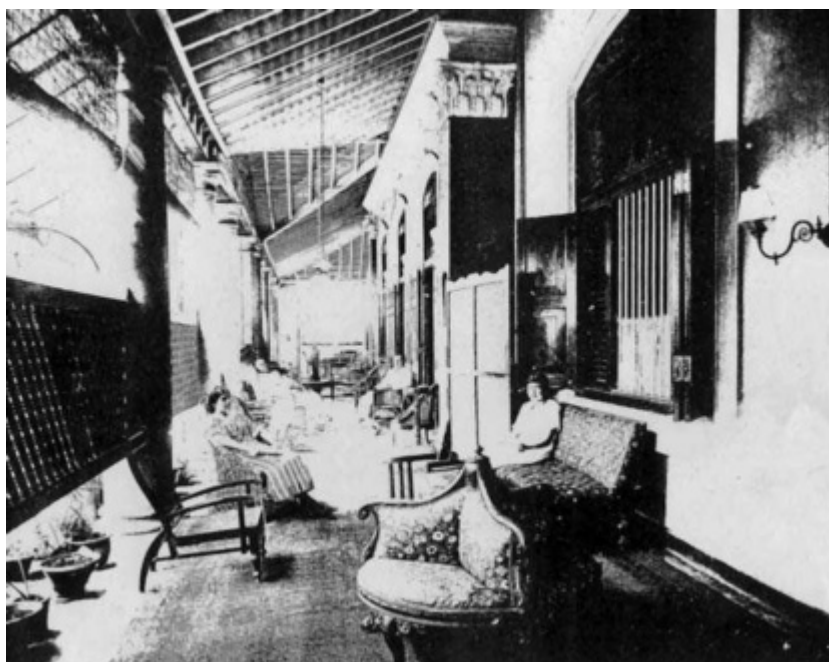


Figure 1.7
Hybridity in the domestic
space of the
colonial-modern
bourgeoisie. Furnished
veranda, Colombo,
ca. 1900.

retreats back to the more accommodating and comfortable ambiguities of the hybrid main house to ponder their discontent.

Rushdie's fictional "constructions" are an intriguing conjecture on the agency of architecture in the awakening of a colonized society into postcolonial consciousness. They underscore not only the obvious relevance of the designed environment within the wider ambit of social production, but also its particularity and its significance for the critical interpretation of social development and change in colonial contexts. Specifically, the pavilion vignette presents us with playfully exaggerated distinctions between (1) essentialist, ethnographic framings (the "Eastern" folly), (2) formalistically skewed historicist framings (the "Western"/"Modernist" folly), and (3) the hybrid ambiguity of a colonial-modern synthesis (the old mansion). These alternative dwellings foreground and critically expose both the material and the representational registers through which architecture operates to frame cultural norms and practices. The binary oppositions between the two follies also characterize the problematic dichotomies that pervade much of the scholarship to date on the architectures of colonial and contemporary South Asia. But it is the hybrid dwelling – the one that is relatively ambiguous with respect to its materiality and symbolic function – that holds our attention and proves the most robust and realistic of the three. Primarily a spatial phenomenon, rich in both texture and meaning but irreducible to either, the old colonial mansion embodies a "space" of everyday life in which different worlds can intersect: a place of cultural and historical in-between-ness (Figure 1.7).³

For interpreters of the distinctive vernacular and contemporary building patterns of South Asia, the "in-between spaces" of architecture – what the

pioneering documenter of the Rajasthani vernacular, Kulbhushan Jain, has called “realms of transition” – have had a particular and long-standing resonance, largely independent of the wider topicality of this notion in contemporary architectural discourse.⁴ The “in-between” has also been a focus of much recent inquiry across a variety of other disciplines concerned with colonial pasts and presents. Postcolonial cultural theorists have addressed the problematic but equally liberating ambiguities of identity arising from the hybridity and (dis)location of culture in the world today. Departing from Edward Said’s seminal critique of the constructed opposition of “East” and “West” in the Orientalist discourses of colonial literature and scholarship, this work has explored the critical relationships between the spatial and conceptual frameworks of this “globalized” contemporary world and the historical experience of colonial imperialism that substantially prefigured it.⁵ For their part, critical historians of colonialism have directed increasing attention to the tensions of empire that were vested in the in-between position of the subordinate rank and file of colonial administrations – “native” and “European” – and to the ambiguous intersections that blurred distinctions between colony and metropole.⁶ As the historians Ann Stoler and Frederic Cooper describe, there has been a shift in the predominant focus of their field, from a unilateral concern with the coercive determinism of metropolitan power and desires in the colonial situation to the examination of how both the colonial and the metropolitan spheres of empire participated in the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion. Within the in-between space of this imperial exchange, postcolonial historians examine how hierarchies of production, power and knowledge emerged in tension with the colonial extension of modern European notions such as universal reason, liberty, market economics, and citizenship.⁷

Not unexpectedly, some of the most compelling critical scholarship on colonial space and society has been characterized by its interdisciplinary approaches. Building on sociologist Anthony King’s seminal early studies of colonial urban development and the material culture of domestic space in British India, such work has explored fruitful overlaps between architecture and other fields such as cartography, geography, sociology, anthropology and cultural theory to examine how power is exercised in and through space, not least through the construction of hybrid spaces.⁸ This is an ongoing enterprise. As the historical geographer, Richard Harris, articulates, this spatialization of hybridity in colonial contexts continues to raise compelling questions for further cross-disciplinary inquiry. Did colonial power intentionally resist hybridity, as certain colonial discourses would suggest, representing it only as it suited the political purposes of the regime? Or was the hybridity that pervaded colonial building forms and practices the evidence of an inevitable compromise, an expression of the limitations of colonial rule and resistance to it? If such resistance and negotiation was indeed demonstrable, to what extent was this experience a generalizable phenomenon across different colonial situations?⁹

In the small and often self-consciously autonomous architectural literature regarding the colonial empires, however, such interdisciplinary queries and insights have made relatively few inroads to date.¹⁰ Although the architectural legacies of British India have received comparatively more scholarly attention than most, there

remains unfortunately a marked disjunction between empirically grounded formalist accounts of this material and largely theoretically grounded critical inquiry in this field.

The formal characteristics of the monumental and, to a lesser extent, the mundane architecture of colonial India have now been relatively well documented in a growing body of literature, both scholarly and popular, published since the 1960s.¹¹ Nevertheless, there is still much work that needs to be done to explain adequately the relationships between the cultural construction of colonial South Asia and the actual formal construction, operation and performance of the built environment. The topic has had only limited benefit from the theoretically engaged interpretations that we have seen, for instance, in the parallel literature on the architecture and urbanism of French colonial Africa and Indochina.¹² The architectural discourse on colonial South Asia presents a conspicuous pattern of silences and obsession with questions of stylistic hybridity and related issues arising from the perceived conflict in the architecture of colonial-modern India between the traditional building crafts of the subcontinent and modern European design principles and methods. As the present authors explore in our respective individual essays, that pattern of intention reveals as much about the discursive contexts and premises of those debates as it does about the historical artifacts and issues in question.

The essays in the present volume examine the manner in which the buildings that arose from and framed the fraught and ambiguous experience of colonial modernity might be regarded as “still frames” – to employ a useful cinematic metaphor – of a continuous, dialogical process of cultural construction and change.¹³ They explore some of the ways in which architecture, from humble dwellings to monumental public buildings, constitutes distinct and particularly revealing frames of practice within the matrix of interconnected colonial discourses. However, we believe that such architectural inquiry has a potential wider relevance and usefulness for interdisciplinary cultural and colonial studies as well. As our subtitle suggests, our broader aim is to discern critically productive strategies, not only for further fruitful study of colonial architecture in the Indian subcontinent, but also for thinking critically through that architecture about colonial modernity more generally.

THINKING THROUGH ARCHITECTURE AS FRAMES OF PRACTICE

Previous scholarship on architecture in colonial India and Ceylon reveals a distinct polarization of concerns. On the one hand, discipline-conscious architectural writers have tended to focus on the material form and style of individual buildings; what we could characterize, by analogy with language, as the vocabulary and grammar of this architecture. On the other hand, extra-disciplinary observers have primarily been interested in semantics – that is, in interpreting colonial architectures and the built environments they comprised as a form of meaningful text in which the cultural politics of colonial-modernity were represented.

Descriptive in nature and synoptic in scope, the large majority of this existing literature has also tended to address only the more obvious forms and functions of these buildings. It is little surprise, therefore, that predominant attention has rested upon the architectural “Splendours of the Raj” – the apposite title of one of the more influential contributions to that literature.¹⁴ Moreover, relatively firm and particular art-historical premises regarding the formal and representational nature of architecture have also guided much of this scholarship. This has tended to narrow the scope of discussion to a debate centered almost exclusively on the material artifacts of colonial architectural production and their relative authenticity with regard to the respective stylistic or political intentions invested in them. In such art-historical accounts, buildings are examined as the discrete outcomes of original intentions and an ensuing creative process. The “story” therefore precedes the actual buildings. The actual production of these buildings, and their subsequent operation and performance as spatial frameworks in which the everyday practices of colonial social life as well as its more overtly political rituals were enacted, have largely been overlooked.

Regarded from a more holistic point of view, of course, it could be argued that architectural histories only begin once buildings have been constructed or at least re-presented outside their designers’ minds, thereby becoming a part of social knowledge and experience. Such a view raises a different order of questions. How do buildings “learn” as semiotic frameworks that gather meaning and value over time?¹⁵ How do buildings, as a form of spatial syntax, materialize and mediate social relations and therefore power?¹⁶ And why, therefore, do certain building types and patterns tend to be reproduced and not be reinvented, perennially, by design?

In these cognitive and cultural terms, colonial-modern building practices could be regarded alternatively as what the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu called a “field of production” – a dynamic, game-like space of relations in which multiple distinct agents (or “players”) took positions and invested their respective competences and resources.¹⁷ In the particular building field of British India, the players included British engineers, architects and bureaucrats, and the far greater numbers of “native” assistant engineers, draftsmen, contractors, craftsmen and construction laborers who did the actual design documentation and building, not to mention the clients and occupants (“European” and “native”) of the buildings produced. It was this multiplicity of players who collaborated or competed, with necessary conviction and a certain “feel for the game,” to (re)produce the characteristic colonial built environment.

As a spatial metaphor, the notion of the “field” can help us appreciate theoretical parallels between architectural production and other fields of production. At the same time, however, the fact that buildings are not just an artifact of a productive “space of relations” in the metaphorical sense that Bourdieu describes, but a material (i.e. “concrete”) embodiment of spatial structure as well, also distinguishes architecture from other forms of disciplinary knowledge and practice.¹⁸ For our present purpose, we find the notion of the “frame” (and hence, “frameworks”)

to be a more analogically specific yet still sufficiently robust metaphor with which to capture this distinct and polyvalent spatiality of architecture, between materiality and representation. As the architectural theorist Kim Dovey reminds us, architecture “frames” space, literally as well as discursively. Everyday life literally “takes place” within the physical frame of buildings, towns and cities. At the same time action can be structured and shaped, circumstantially or by design, by the walls and windows of our buildings. As a form of discourse, built forms can also construct and frame meaning, and places can tell stories.¹⁹

This multi-faceted notion of “frame” begins to indicate the polyvalent understanding of architecture and its discourses explored in the present essays. Whilst foregrounding the potential contradictions between the representational and the material functions of architectural form, it also indicates a variety of other ways of reading architecture and thinking through it, as it were, as a framework for interpreting colonial culture and society critically. Most significantly, it illustrates how architecture can be understood in space and time as what we might call a “frame of practices” rather than finite and permanent form – dynamic, projective, propositional, and perennially negotiated in cultural practice.

The essays collected in this volume explore a wide range of different frames and practices, from a study of the evolving dwelling practices of colonial officials as they assimilated their notions of home and self to the monumental frame of an appropriated Mughal tomb, to the global frameworks of pan-imperial institutions such as the Department of Science and Arts of the South Kensington Museum and its role in framing the practices of the traditional craftsmen-builders in colonial-modern India. Working from below on questions of agency, modes of production, and actual practice, these essays reflect a return from a more polemical vein of postcolonial critical inquiry to the methodological groundwork and seminal hypotheses of an earlier generation of pioneering scholarship on the material history and culture of colonial South Asia.²⁰ Theoretically engaged, yet working close to the grain of the colonial archive and local records, this strategy attempts to avoid sweeping essentialist assertions while enabling a more rigorous examination of the multiple roles played by architecture on the colonial scene, as a frame of practices only partially determined by the norms and intentions of the architectural discipline itself.

As the fulcrum of inquiry, the notion of “practice” is the most significant point of connection between the individual essays in this volume. Focusing on practice directs our sights (not away from but rather) *through* the frame of the colonial built environment to the wider field of practices from which these distinctive forms and patterns of building and dwelling emerged, and with which these same forms and patterns have in turn sustained a continuing dialogical relationship in the social (re)production of space. This productive but problematical relationship is explored here with regard to three particular frames of practice. The respective institutional and residential contexts in which the characteristic norms and forms of the colonial built environments of South Asia took shape and acquired meaning define two of these frames of practice. A third frame of key importance to our critical under-

standing of this topic is the focus of this introductory chapter and the first two individual contributions to this collection. This is the frame of discursive practices within past and present scholarship on colonial South Asia through which this topic has been explored to date.

FRAMES OF DISCOURSE

For all the substance and stability of actual buildings, the study of architecture as a frame of cultural practices and production is both complicated and enriched by the inherent ambiguity of the discipline. As Peter Scriver explores in the subsequent essay, "Stones and Texts,"²¹ the peculiar significance of architecture as a frame for thinking and theory-building about Indian culture was seemingly self-evident to architectural scholars working within the framework of colonial rule. Over the half-century since the end of formal European imperialism, however, the ideological underpinnings to these premises have been progressively obscured. Scriver examines how the architectural historiography of colonial India has continued to be shaped by similarly firm and particular ideas about the material and symbolic status of architecture. For readers unfamiliar with the historical and polemical backgrounds of this discourse, Scriver's essay provides a historiographical addendum to this introductory chapter through a critical overview of the content and methodologies of the existing literature in this field. In his critical reconstruction, Scriver examines the roles of both individual agents and institutionalized agencies within the colonial administration in framing the assiduously differentiated discourses on "Indian" architecture, and "modern" architecture *in* India, respectively, within which many later scholars have continued to work. The second part of the essay charts the accelerated development of these seemingly autonomous discourses in the past three decades in particular. With a critical view to the changing conditions of production that have influenced both the consumption and critique of architecture in this same period, the essay articulates the selective emphasis this has had in forming current knowledge and judgment regarding the colonial-modern architectural history of India and its postcolonial neighbor states.

The peculiarly unstable ontology of architecture and its potential as a frame for critical postcolonial inquiry is the focus of Stephen Cairns's essay, "The Stone Books of Orientalism."²² As Cairns observes, "architecture has always quivered between material and representational worlds without ever settling on one or the other" (Figure 1.8). With particular regard to early Orientalist interpretations of Indian architecture – what the nineteenth-century historian James Fergusson later called the "stone books" of Indian history – Cairns carefully deconstructs the reception of Edward Said's paradigmatic critique of "Orientalism" in architectural scholarship, and a reductive emphasis on the primacy of representation in colonial cultural construction that has ensued. Architecture is not just another text, he suggests. While it may serve as a textlike medium for the transdisciplinary translation of ideologies, it cannot be reduced to that function alone. Working at the boundaries between cross-cultural scholarship in architecture and the parallel field



Figure 1.8
Qur'anic inscriptions on a
sixteenth-century stone
mosque, rural West
Bengal.

of postcolonial studies, Cairns observes how scholarship on the architecture of colonial India and other colonial contexts has belatedly begun to deploy the relatively immediate and most pervasive arguments of postcolonial theory concerning the discursive representation of the "other." But across the spectrum of current critical inquiry on other forms of colonial discourse, he notes, scholars have begun to reassess the grand, and initially coarse and polemical, critique of Orientalism. Such "post-Saidian" studies attempt to develop a more productive account of that discourse, the binary oppositions it invokes, and the distinctiveness of the various different arts and modes of cultural production that contributed to it. Accordingly, Cairns calls for a more discerning, methodologically rigorous, extension of the postcolonial studies agenda within the architectural field. Beyond questions of representation, he argues, "cross-cultural scholarship in architecture also requires another register, one that pays attention to the peculiar status of architecture within the larger system of cultural production."

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Among the bureaucratic apparatuses through which Britain administered its colonial empire, institutions such as public works departments and the Archaeological Survey of India framed some of the most characteristic and instrumental practices of the colonial building world. The significance of such institutional frameworks has long been acknowledged in work on the cultural practices and social mapping of colonial India.²³ But institutional agency in the production of the colonial built environment, and the distinctive colonial-modern modes of production on which these relied, are only beginning to be addressed rigorously as proper objects of architectural inquiry. The four essays grouped under this heading address an array of different institutional frameworks that shaped or managed particular norms and forms of practice on the colonial building scene. Through their respective cases, these essays examine both the structures of institutional knowledge and power, and the modes of reasoning that such structures enabled. Reading close to the grain of the institutional archives, they discern and interpret the multivalent complexities of institutional agency. They also examine how values and intentions in the

Figure 1.9
PWD sub-office, Bombay
(Mumbai).



sphere of everyday colonial administration were transmitted into routine practices that shaped the built environment over time.

Along with the Army, the Public Works Department (PWD) was among the most powerful and extensive instruments of colonial administration and agency in British India. As the technical branch of government, the PWD was almost solely responsible for producing the ubiquitous matrix of utilitarian buildings and infrastructure through which the Indian subcontinent was restructured under British rule (Figure 1.9). In “Empire-Building and Thinking,”²⁴ the first of three essays that address this key institution, Peter Scriver examines the institutional nature and evolution of the PWD as a form of default framework of institutionalized design practices. This was also a frame of thinking, he argues, in which the norms that constrained the distinctive forms of the everyday built environment of colonial India were developed and sustained. But how did the initially provisional design and construction methods of the PWD become the seemingly rigid framework so integral to the formal and conceptual structures of the colonial system? To answer the question, Scriver scrutinizes the vested subcultures of the colonial system, including the military and civil engineers who formed the professional cadre of the PWD. He also considers how the bread-and-butter buildings produced by the PWD could be regarded as a sort of refuge of pragmatism from the more overtly ideological of imperial Britain’s architectural constructions in India. Through an analysis that emphasizes the explanatory significance of cognitive change, however, the tendency to make monolithic readings of institutional agency and, hence, the “architecture of the colonial state” is put in question. Rather, as Scriver articulates, subtle changes in building forms over the final century of British rule belied significant changes in the design reasoning that produced and reproduced them – from

the open, strategic rationality of conquest, to the increasingly closed-minded thinking of a permanent colonial administration secure only in the authority of its system.

In the eyes of its critics, the PWD represented the vanguard in India of a mechanizing cast of mind that had already substantially industrialized the building world of nineteenth-century Europe. Concerned, at least initially, with the rationalization of building designs suitable for European occupation in the Indian subcontinent, the PWD eventually directed comparable efforts to standardizing the design and construction methods by which such buildings could be produced systematically and therefore dependably. For its critics, the standardizing rationale of the PWD system had tragic implications, not only for the formal character of “modern Indian architecture” but for the indigenous building industry on which the PWD was almost entirely dependent for material and labor. However, as Arindam Dutta and Vikramaditya Prakash explore in their respective essays, this critique of the PWD assumed its own institutional framings and agency as a discourse within the peculiar proto-industrial frame of colonial modernity.

Among the most vociferous of these critics were British decorative arts enthusiasts in colonial India, and their advocates back in England – later referred to as the Arts and Crafts movement, following the foundation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888.²⁵ While the Industrial Revolution was continuing to transform society and culture in Victorian England, the decorative arts had emerged as the focus of an aesthetic and moral resistance that championed the revival of the hand-crafted production of unalienated traditional labor. By contrast with the long-lost guilds of medieval Europe, however, crafts advocates seized upon the crafts of modern-day India – not least its traditional building crafts and architectural sculpture – as evidence of the artistic riches of a “living” medieval society. Of course, as Prakash argues, this stereotype served primarily to mirror and verify the crafts advocates’ nostalgic conception of what England properly ought to be. But it was an idyllic and seductive representation to which crafts enthusiasts in India would devote their own considerable labor and passion to compel colonial building practices to conform. Working from the margins of the official framework of power and agency on the colonial scene, however, they pursued a paradoxical, double-headed enterprise; that of proving the claims of the decorative arts movement to their detractors, both at home and in the colony, and of justifying such anti-progressivism at the same time, as part of the civilizing mission of the colonial project.²⁶

In his essay, “Strangers within the Gate,”²⁷ Dutta revisits the case of the Indian craftsman-builder in a critical analysis of the role of an influential imperial institution – the South Kensington Museum and its Department of Science and Art – in shaping the discourse on architectural production and building method in colonial-modern India. Dutta posits a challenging historical-materialist argument in which he critiques the local fetishization of the “traditional” craftsmanship of the Indian builder. This needs to be understood, he argues, in the light of the radical objectification and reorganization of labor in the much larger, global framework of

the British imperial economy. Would it be possible, Dutta queries, to think of the artisan as an entity that is not so much under threat of annihilation by industrialization as it is a creation of that very moment?

The Department of Science and Art (DSA) was the main bureaucratic body governing art education throughout the British Empire. Influenced by the radical thinkers of the mid-nineteenth century, the key motif of the DSA agenda was to improve industrial production, both in metropolitan Britain and its colonial periphery, through the improvement of art. Drawing on Marx's theories of labor and capital while also critiquing the limitations of Marx's own paradigmatic analysis of the structure of British rule in India, Dutta examines the ambiguous, contrapuntal relationship between the DSA and the PWD. In his analysis of the DSA's efforts to reform and secure crafts production on the British Indian building scene, Dutta seeks to demonstrate the ways in which colonial institutions adopted local practices as a way of securing their authority. Their primary effort was to bring the native craftsman partially into the global system of production by the means of colonial imperialism, rather than to grant him or her universal subjecthood. Managing custom was a key determinant. A major contribution of Dutta's chapter is, therefore, to map out the uneven emergence of the colonial native into modernity.

In the subsequent chapter, "Between Copying and Creation,"²⁸ Prakash provides a salient microhistorical counterpoint to Dutta's broad-brush structural analysis of the decorative Arts and Crafts discourse in colonial India. Prakash offers a fresh examination of a celebrated case of colonial-modern cultural construction under the enlightened patronage of the nominally autonomous princely state of Jaipur. Interpreting relevant discourses within and between the institutional frameworks of Jaipur's model colonial-modern bureaucracy, the essay examines the role of architectural drawing as a tool of cultural representation and (re)production. Prakash traces the work and ideologies of a handful of British crafts enthusiasts in the service of the Jaipur state during the reign of raja Sawai Ram Singh (1852–80), and specifically of the engineer-architect, Swinton Jacob (Figure 1.10). Working through the institutional frameworks of the Jaipur State PWD and School of Industrial Arts and Crafts, these men devoted themselves to the development of standards and institutions for the advancement of technical training in architectural drawing, building arts, and craft.

By working for a local maharaja rather than the colonial administration of British India, Jacob and his colleagues felt they were in a special situation. Here, a knowing crafts advocate could impart the "sympathetic guidance" that the traditional Rajput craftsmen needed to enable them to develop in their "own natural line," free of the distracting influences and contingencies of the modern world that pressed upon the frontiers of their desert kingdom. But, as Prakash argues, such fetishized development, however sympathetic the guidance, was bound to be framed by the conditions of its production.

Between their two essays, Prakash and Dutta offer a fresh and pointed reexamination of the institutional frameworks through which advocates of the emerging Arts and Crafts movement of Victorian England operated in colonial

India, and the PWD system that they resisted. With Scriver's analysis of the shifting patterns of intention and practice within the PWD, these studies bring alternative theoretical arguments to bear on both the material and the representational issues revealed at the intersection of these apparently antagonistic yet mutually engaged institutions – as they were – within the larger framework of the British imperial enterprise.

The final essay of this group provides an intriguing triangulation to the analysis of the institutional frameworks and case material addressed in Dutta's and Prakash's essays. In "Institutional Audiences and Architectural Style"²⁹ Paul Walker examines the design and reception of the Napier Museum in the nominally autonomous princely state of Travancore. In the estimation of previous scholars, the Napier Museum was a key example in South India of the same pseudo-Indic approach to the design of modern public buildings championed in the north by the progressive state of Jaipur and its crafts-aligned British consultants. While the skillful eclecticism of the museum's crafts-inspired designer, R. F. Chisholm, has attracted considerable attention, Walker's reappraisal of this relatively well-known case of Chisholm's work opens the way to a substantially different understanding of the colonial discourse on architectural style by questioning who the actual audiences of colonial



Figure 1.10
King George's Medical College, Lucknow. Swinton Jacob, consulting architect with S. Crookshank, executive engineer, 1908–10. Jacob was a prolific freelance architectural consultant in later career. He designed numerous institutional buildings in his distinctive Jaipur-derived Indo-Saracenic style, in different parts of British India as well as other princely states.

architecture and the colonial-modern institutions it housed were – not least “public” museums. Walker’s careful cross-examination of the original design intentions for the museum versus its reception and later renovations reveals that there were multiple constituencies to which the architecture of the public buildings of colonial-modern India was addressed. This warranted a range of stylistic approaches, with each style projecting different communities and different competencies.

Walker, like Dutta, approaches his local case study from a novel global perspective that offers further critical insight into the machinations of the broader imperial framework of colonial-modern institutions, knowledge and representation. Questions about the colonial construction of local knowledge that Walker pursues in his close reading of Chisholm’s museum are articulated through a comparison with a contemporary museum building project in Christchurch, New Zealand. In this way the essay invokes the imperial dimensions and institutional parameters of a discourse about the material and representational uses of architecture in the museological framing of difference. It engages not only the metropolitan viewpoint of centralized imperial authority, but also a revealing view from a very different margin of the British Empire.

New Zealand museums, like Indian ones, faced the problem of the relationship with the local in their architecture and in their collections. The relationship of the European settler population to the indigenous “others” whom it had displaced could not be ignored. Walker’s interpretation necessarily articulates further distinctions within colonial discourse, between North and South, and between neo-European “settler colonies” and the more overtly paternalistic and exploitative colonial regimes of South Asia. Questioning the audiences of colonial architectures prompts similar questions in regard to the audience/readership for such critical postcolonial histories more generally. What larger questions do they raise, Walker asks, for readers in architectural history previously unexposed to postcolonial history and criticism?

DOMESTIC FRAMES OF PRACTICE

If the ideals and designs of Empire were most overtly represented by the institutions of colonial administration and enterprise, and the public buildings and spaces those institutions constructed, it was the everyday dwelling forms and practices of private domestic space in which some of the most radical innovations in colonial-modern culture were materialized. This latter framework of colonial-modern residential space is the common focus of the final four essays.

The characteristic domestic environment of colonial South Asia was framed by the loose array of bungalows, “type quarters” and housing “colonies” that occupied the gaps – cultural as well as spatial – between two contrasting morphologies. On one hand were the densely packed, inward-oriented “native” towns; on the other hand, the sprawling suburban “cantonments,” the permanent army settlements, in which all military personnel were accommodated (Figure 1.11). By contrast with the public, institutional face of colonial authority, this civilian

in-between space was a private realm. In the protective and partially concealing shade of their verandas and leafy compounds, its residents – including substantial numbers of the indigenous elite – attempted to make themselves at home in colonial-modernity (Figure 1.12).³⁰

But the colonial-modern domestic environment had a duplicitous nature, at once synthesizing and coercive. Although colonial technocrats typically rationalized the expansive organization and distribution of this residential space on practical and medical grounds that privileged optimal access to light, space and air, it also described a seemingly transparent pattern of segregation and, hence, social control.³¹ However, as each of the present essays reveals, the physical and social parameters of colonial residential space were not as sharply defined as previous scholars have assumed. Closer examination of the actual modes of production that shaped the colonial domestic environment, and the everyday dwelling practices that sustained it, has questioned any simple correlation between the physical spaces of these residential buildings and compounds and the social spaces they framed.³² For example, as Swati Chattopadhyay has argued elsewhere, the intimate dependence of the colonial Europeans upon their often substantial “households” of indigenous servants tended to blur the boundaries of “white” and “black” space beyond meaningful distinction.³³ This domestic picture is further complicated by new evidence of the role of speculative builders and landlords – predominantly

Figure 1.11
Colonial residential
space, Allahabad, early
twentieth century.



Figure 1.12
Ananda Bhawan (later called *Swaraj Bhawan*), the home of Motilal Nehru, Civil Lines, Allahabad. Motilal was a wealthy Oxford-trained lawyer and prominent nationalist. His son was Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister following independence from British rule in 1947.



Indian rather than European – in the production and development of what has previously been regarded as the quintessential “European” residential architecture of colonial South Asia.³⁴

Sylvia Shorto's contribution to the present volume is an intriguing case study of colonial building and dwelling practices that further blurs the assumed differences between the indigenous and introduced architectures of colonial-modern India. In “A Tomb of One's Own”³⁵ Shorto examines the progressive transformation of a single residential structure as the architectural frame in which a complex dialectic of both routine and symbolic functions was played out over a period of two centuries in the history of Lahore. In Shorto's rendering the colonial-modern dwelling is a cross-cultural hybrid, not by design but by a slow and contingent process of accretion – a building that sees, hears, and learns as it gathers history and meaning through successive renovations and reuse. As Shorto reminds us, the relative ease with which the British assumed imperial control of the Indian subcontinent can be attributed in part to their effective manipulation of certain forms and symbols of the waning Mughal Empire. As they moved up and across the northern plains, the British appropriated the military infrastructure and monumental architecture of their Mughal predecessors, adopting many of their public rituals and more ephemeral spatial practices as well. When the British annexed Lahore in 1849, a city that had enjoyed imperial Mughal patronage, they found a deserted suburban fringe of formal gardens. Though they made few changes to the walled city itself, the British altered this decaying city fringe beyond recognition, setting the stage for Lahore's modern urban development. A civil station and a cantonment were built over and among suburban Mughal monuments. Standing structures, including sub-imperial residences, mosques and tombs that were visibly set apart in spacious gardens, were reused for a variety of purposes. They found equivalence with the British idea of elite space, and they helped bolster the public presence that the new rulers wished to project.

Against this background, Shorto examines the case of a seventeenth-century tomb that was adapted as a residence for the first British Governor of the Punjab, Sir Henry Lawrence, in 1852. Altered on several subsequent occasions, it is still used today as the official Governor's residence for the Pakistani State of Punjab. The essay interprets the siting and the evolving form, function and decoration of this progressively expanded structure. By limiting the focus to elite domestic space, Shorto is able to link the effect of the built environment on the public behavior of the British in India. Underlying this reading is the hypothesis that the structural analysis of material culture can advance an understanding of colonial mentalities. Shorto also concentrates on the metaphor of the visual field, using this to explore a definition of the public sphere in a colonial setting. She shows that the British reverted to outmoded patterns of public behavior, close in nature to the feudal model in Europe prior to the seventeenth century. This behavior not only helped to control their indigenous subjects, she concludes, but it also affected the hierarchical structure of the British themselves in their artificial colonial enclaves.

Shorto's intriguing case study of formal and spatial assimilation on the part of the colonizers raises foundational issues from the point of view of a postcolonial critique of such architectural histories. It again belies the assumption of discrete binary distinctions in the colonial landscape. Shorto describes the incremental accretion of a "thirdspace" as the geographer, Edward Soja, might characterize it – a material instantiation of what King has described as a colonial "third culture," fundamentally transfigured in the colonial situation from its metropolitan counterpart.³⁶ Shorto's reading of the tomb-house shows how built form, as a heuristic device, could be a pliable if not neutral medium for the construction of multiple spaces. As the final three chapters in this volume explore, the colonized were engaged as surely and imaginatively as the colonizers were in appropriating and constructing such spaces for self-invention within the frame of colonial-modern domesticity.

During the long era of British rule in Bengal, the elite residence in the countryside – the country villa or garden house (*bagan bari* in Bengali) – became a ubiquitous symbol of privilege and power. In "The Other Face of Primitive Accumulation"³⁷ Swati Chattopadhyay explores how garden houses were built and used by both the British and Bengali elites. The practice began in the eighteenth century and was in many ways a continuation of the elite Mughal tradition of pleasure pavilions. British travelogues and paintings depicted these residences as serene white edifices planted with lush gardens and orchards. In Bengali imagination, however, they increasingly came to represent everything that had gone awry with Bengali culture and society under the Permanent Settlement of Bengal. The Permanent Settlement, a quasi-feudal system of land administration adopted by the British government, created an Indian *comprador* class of landlords whose relation to the land was parasitic. In the nineteenth century, as Chattopadhyay argues, the idea of the garden house as a site of conspicuous consumption of Nature became linked to social vices peculiar to colonial modernity. Often used as leisure spaces and weekend escapes from the city, they came to be seen as haunts of a city-based

elite who were completely estranged from the culture and social life of the countryside.

In her essay, Chattopadhyay draws upon an innovative range of sources, including architectural drawings, literature, probate inventories and government reports. She uses these to trace changes in the idea and form of the garden-house from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, and to argue that the material culture of the garden house offers a critical locus to understand the city–countryside relation under British colonialism in Bengal. Working with local government records and other novel sources in West Bengal and Pakistan, respectively, both Chattopadhyay's and Shorto's studies substantially enhance and extend established accounts of dwelling practices in colonial India which have largely been based on exemplary case studies of Delhi and other key colonial settlements in the northern-central alluvial plains regions of the subcontinent, such as Lucknow. But as Anoma Pieris explores in her study of colonial Colombo, similarly paradoxical tensions prevailed in the norms if not the forms of colonial-modern dwelling practiced in climatically and culturally distinct regions of South Asia as well. Focusing on the suburban mansions of the new Sinhalese bourgeoisie of British Ceylon, Pieris offers an intriguing complement to Chattopadhyay's essay in particular. She describes the ambivalent in-between position of another indigenous elite under colonial-modernity that selectively appropriated building forms such as the bungalow, and the identity politics of the emerging nationalist movement of neighboring India, but adapted these into its own distinctive processes of cultural negotiation and resistance.

In "The Trouser under the Cloth"³⁸ Pieris describes how hybridity in the framing of residential forms and practices could be mobilized politically by those who sought to claim a dual identity and agency in colonial-modernity, between the opposing enterprises of imperialism and nationalism. As Pieris explains, the "trouser under the cloth" was the name given to a peculiar mode of dress consisting of a trouser wrapped in a short cloth that was adopted by the native component of the colonial administration under British rule (1815–1948) as well as the westernized elite. This hybrid garment reflected the ambivalence necessary for the new bourgeoisie to negotiate both the colonial and the indigenous social structures. But as Pieris discerns in her account of the rising fortunes and architectural flamboyance of one such family, the freedom to negotiate some identities and to produce others was most readily available to marginal caste groups who inhabited the cultural periphery and moved more easily across the binaries of the colonial predicament. Building economic power and growing cultural confidence through colonial industrial enterprise, these groups left their provincial beginnings to become an anglicized urban elite in the colonial capital, constructing their homes and their appearances to conceal their own insecurities and cultural betrayals. Focusing on the successive residential building efforts over three generations of a single family as they attempted to consolidate their social status through the manipulation of architectural affect and meaning, Pieris draws attention to the complex, sometimes chameleonic identities through which colonial opportunities and impending nationalist agendas had

to be negotiated. By interpreting these houses through the sartorial metaphor that underpins her essay, as a performative rather than a permanent frame of representation, Pieris shows how architecture participated in challenging the fixed identities and rigid oppositions through which the boundaries of both colonial and nationalist stances have tended to be constructed.

The final chapter of this volume returns to India in the twilight years of British rule to examine New Delhi, arguably still the paradigm case of urban and residential development in colonial-modern South Asia in terms of formal planning and design. In "Negotiated Modernities"³⁹ Jyoti Hosagrahar focuses on the rapidly intensifying urbanism of housing development in the new viceregal capital in the 1930s and 1940s. This essay offers additional insight into the contested in-between realm of the colonial-modern domestic environment, but through a substantially different case representing the emergent urban middle classes rather than the bourgeois elites. Hosagrahar describes a complex field of design premises, negotiations and practices that were brought into play in the final years of formal colonial rule as contending housing authorities and interest groups attempted to sew up the remaining gaps in the residential fabric between the monolithic oppositions of the sprawling "New Delhi" of the British colonial officialdom and the former Mughal Delhi within the old walled city of Shahjahanabad. Hosagrahar explores how housing projects located in this uncertain territory, between the new and the old cities, negotiated a hybrid middle ground. Metaphorically, this middle ground lay between the modern and the traditional, and between the top-down ideals of orderly, rational planning and formal splendor epitomized in the recently completed new capital and the bottom-up forces of incremental growth, negotiation and disobedience that were the key to the historical development of the distinctive urban morphology and dwelling practices that prevailed within the walls of the old city. Intended to meet rising accommodation demands with housing that would represent modernity and the progress possible under colonial rule, these housing schemes were planned as model living environments characterized by orderly layouts of identical units on uniform lots in economically homogeneous neighborhoods. However, as Hosagrahar's account reveals, despite the idealizations and rhetoric of the colonial housing authorities, real-estate speculation, profit motives, and a variety of formal and informal negotiations heavily influenced the final form of the projects. The grand architecture of the new capital was meant to celebrate the state's imperial authority, and the new planned communities the ideal subjects of that empire. In fact, neither entirely "modern" and rational, nor entirely "traditional" and irrational, the new housing projects formed a hybrid landscape that complicated simple identities and oppositions and reconciled extremes.

BETWEEN MATERIALITY AND REPRESENTATION

In a similar critical attempt to frame the content and trajectories of recent scholarship on the architecture and urbanism of the British Raj, Anthony King observed in 1992 that the emerging literature in the field was a revealing illustration of the

tenacious nature of the colonial project.⁴⁰ As an academic project, he charged, this discourse was still squarely centered in the West. All but one of the twelve most recent monographs on the topic were the work of non-Indian authors writing for a Western readership of either academics or armchair travelers. The political and cultural economy behind this production of knowledge was still clearly driven by interests and agendas arising outside the former colonial society, not least the old imperial core itself. Bound up in all this neocolonial scholarly enterprise was the tenacious assumption of the dominance of the imperial regime on the colonial building scene. This assumption had effectively marginalized at least two other salient points of view, in King's estimation: (1) the indigenous "resistance" to the colonizer's plans and projects in the building field; and (2) the "vernacular" perceptions and processes of building in the context of colonial rule but outside the purview of official building activity.

The present volume is a sample of the changing questions, objects and viewpoints of further critical inquiry in this field a decade and a half later. It can hardly be disputed that Western academia continues to be the dominant context in which such research is conducted. However, thinking through the frames of architecture, building and dwelling with the expanding range of research strategies and theoretical tactics that the following essays engage is – we believe – enabling, at the very least, a more productive engagement of this field in the broader academic project of postcolonial inquiry. A comprehensive spatial analysis of architectural, building and urban form in colonial and postcolonial South Asia, which also provides insights into the economic, social and cultural changes that have taken place in the last century or more, has still to be written. But to begin to interpret rigorously the buildings of British India and Ceylon as embodiments of colonial-modern social space and production necessitates the more dialogical understanding of architecture – between and beyond its material and representational registers – that these essays individually and collectively pursue. With such a dialogical understanding, it is apparent that the inventive as well as the resistive forces of "native" agency and the "vernacular" – under which we include the invented building traditions of the colonizers with those of their indigenous subjects – are integral to the history and the theory of these colonial built environments, and the colonial-modernities that they helped, in turn, to construct.

Chapter 2: Stones and Texts

The Architectural Historiography of Colonial India and its Colonial-Modern Contexts

Peter Sriver

The notion that architecture is a bridge between disciplines – a conjunction and synthesis of knowledges rather than an autonomous category unto itself – has wide if not universally accepted currency in current architectural discourse.¹ Certainly, for those of us who examine colonial architectures and their associated cultural spaces, this fuzzy and inclusive notion of the topic can be particularly useful. By contrast, however, comparatively firm and particular premises about the material and symbolic status of architecture have shaped much of the previous literature on the exemplary case of architecture in colonial India. As Stephen Cairns elucidates in the next chapter, a paradigmatic notion of buildings as a form of materialized representation or “stone book” has been profoundly influential in focusing and delimiting this particular discourse. Especially problematic is a categorical distinction that this notion has served to reinforce between “Indian” architecture and “Modern” or “European” architecture *in* India. On the one hand the putatively “essential” principles, and hence “timeless” characteristics, of India’s building forms and traditions have typically been examined within an ethnographic framework. On the other hand, colonial European building efforts in the Indian subcontinent have tended to be assessed historically, as case histories of the reception and diffusion of metropolitan architectural styles and debates in the imperial periphery.

To further articulate the critical aims and stances of the current architectural scholarship on colonial India and Ceylon represented in this volume, this chapter examines the historical development of this discourse and the paradigmatic premises that have underpinned it. I begin with the conspicuously divided pattern of intention that characterized the discussion of architecture in India during the colonial era itself. I then outline critically some of the key debates and evolving discursive contexts in which these premises and patterns became institutionalized over time – a conceptual framework, I argue, in which more recent historical writing on the topic has remained embedded to an important and problematical extent.

"INDIAN" ARCHITECTURE

For early commentators, and indeed many still, the ancient architecture of India was material evidence of the distinct and primordial nature of Indian civilization; a form of text in stone, more stable and hence authentic than ephemeral written records, in which one could read essential truths about the values and creative propensities of the peoples who had produced it. This notion can be traced back to some of the earliest representations of India by Orientalist scholars in the late eighteenth century.² But it was James Fergusson's singular and sustained effort in the mid-nineteenth century to champion the study of what he called the "stone book" of Indian architecture that was most influential in propagating this particular view (Figure 2.1).³

The significance of Fergusson's own weighty and stridently authoritative books on the topic would be difficult to overstate. Between 1845 and the appearance of his definitive *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* in 1876, he published no fewer than six scholarly works on or substantially about Indian architecture, four of these encyclopedic in scope.⁴ These became the seminal texts and conceptual palimpsest for all subsequent scholarship on the topic and remain central to the teaching of architectural history in India to this day.⁵ Any critical discussion of India's architectural historiography must therefore take into account the nature and, in particular, the inertia of Fergusson's paradigm.⁶

Fergusson's direct knowledge of Indian architecture was gathered early in his career as an amateur observer and artist who had traveled widely in India in the 1830s while serving in his family's indigo-growing business. Engaged as he was in the commercial development of British India, Fergusson's thinking was therefore



Figure 2.1
Fergusson's illustration of the facade of an early rock-cut temple, Loma Rishi Cave, near Gaya (ca. 3rd century BC) on which details of contemporary wooden construction are sculpted. Like the original photographic plate from which the printer's plate is transcribed, the image articulates the etched surface of the rock and the layers of meaningful architectural text inscribed upon and within it. Note also the topi-capped scholar scrutinizing the details.

firmly grounded in the scientific materialism that had propelled Britain's technological lead in the industrial revolution and its ensuing colonial expansion. While the evolutionary biology of Fergusson's contemporary, Charles Darwin, would have a paradigmatic impact on later architectural theories, as in other fields, geology was the exemplary natural science of Fergusson's formative years that furnished the analogical model for his ethnologically oriented theories of architecture.⁷ In his self-consciously scientific mode of reasoning there was little to distinguish the objective and rigorous study of architectural history from the methods and material artifacts of archaeology. The truths of architecture were evident in its immutable materiality. Following the same line of thought, he reasoned that architecture/archaeology was to ethnology what palaeontology was to geology – that is, the deciphering of the fossil record or texts in stone, as it were, and the content and structure of the histories these described.

Thinking through this geological paradigm, Fergusson's critical interpretation of India's architectural past was therefore guided by a theory of nature. He inferred natural laws and processes from what he observed rather than any normative, humanistic theories of history or culture. Like the entropic process of slow and ceaseless movement in geological time from rudeness and impurity to the structural uniformity and refinement of monolithic strata that a geologist might read in an exposed rock face, the history of India's architecture was – in Fergusson's analogical reading – a story of the emergence in isolation of a "racially" pure and distinctive architecture (Figure 2.2).⁸ Colonization was analogous to violent geological cataclysms such as volcanic eruptions and the collision of tectonic plates, in this comparison. The regional, typological and stylistic variations observed in India's architecture were evidence of rupture and ensuing decline as earlier incursions into the Indian subcontinent by other racial groups had resulted in the architectural miscegenation of essentially different racial types with different propensities as builders.⁹ In Fergusson's opinion it was only by purification – by returning to the essential formal and construction principles that distinguished the historical architectures of the different "races" – that any architecture could be improved.¹⁰

"MODERN" ARCHITECTURE IN INDIA

Fergusson's views on the architecture of modern India were logically consistent with his dogmatic reading and interpretation of its monumental past. Enamored with Indian architecture as a paragon of what he called a "true" (versus "imitative") style of architecture, the critical significance of this other building tradition for the modern European observer rested in the didactic clarity of its difference as an authentic, unadulterated representation of the original intention and genius of an autonomous civilization.¹¹ The very idea of a "modern Indian architecture" was therefore problematical. While Fergusson's critique of the "modern styles" of post-Renaissance European architecture – which he regarded as irrational historicist mimicry – was well developed in his other writings, it remained largely implicit in his

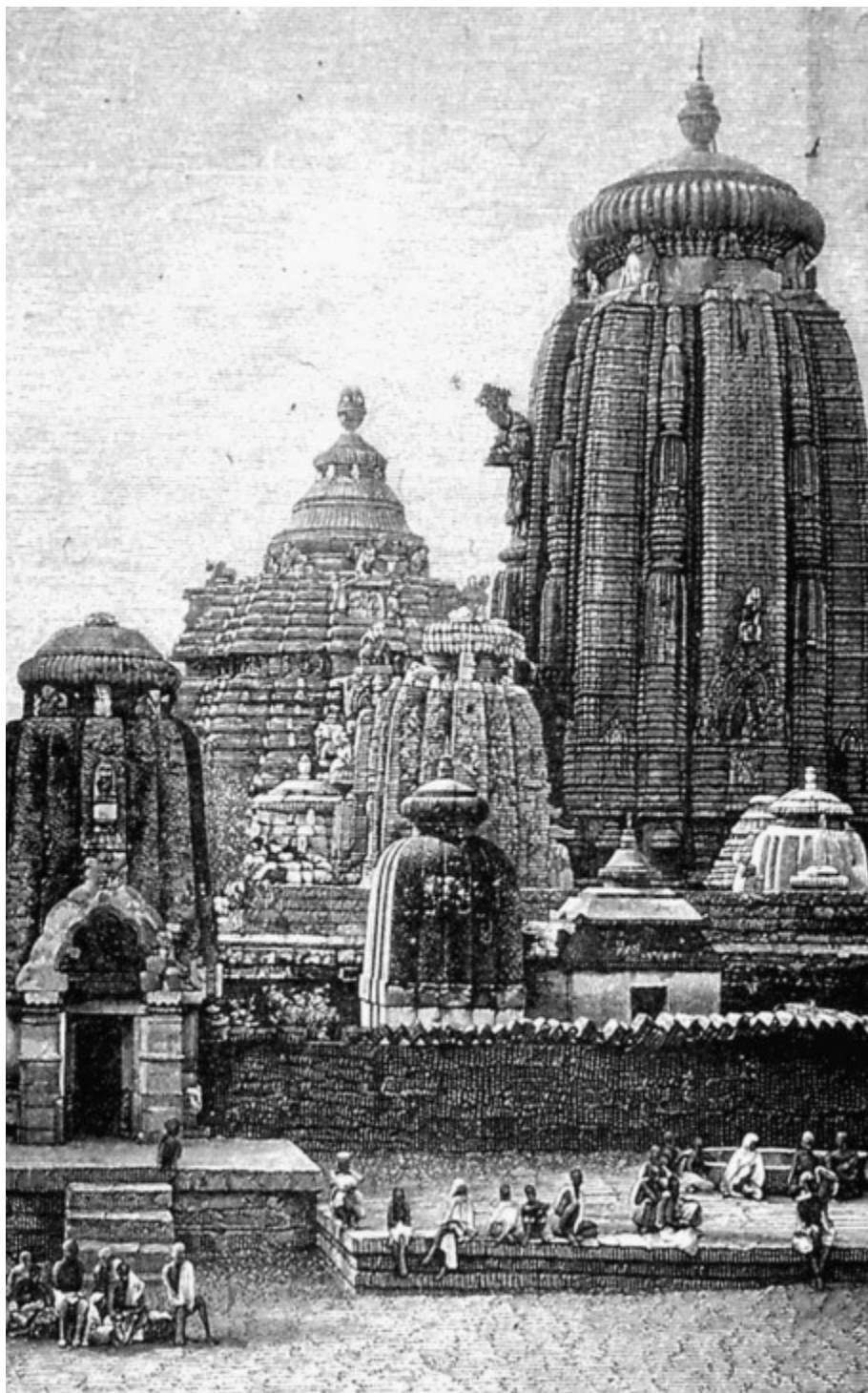


Figure 2.2
Fergusson's illustration of the Great Temple, Bhubaneswar, the apex of Indian architecture in his view.

critical assessment of Indian architecture through his virtual censure of comment on the contemporary buildings of the subcontinent.¹² A revealing exception was his critique of the early nineteenth-century architecture of nawabi Oudh.

A quintessential exemplar of modern architecture, in Fergusson's terms, was the extraordinary palace that the French mercenary, Major-General Claude Martin, had built for himself in Lucknow in the 1790s while serving as the political agent of the British East India Company to the court of the Nawab of Oudh (Figure 2.3). This monumental concoction of transplanted Classical motifs had "... sin[ned] against most of the rules of pure Palladian Art ...," in Fergusson's opinion. But it was not this amateurism that he deplored so much as the pernicious influence of this misguided caprice on the autonomous architectural tradition of Oudh.¹³ If a true architecture was a form of text in stone in which the inherent principles and constructive genius of a race were clearly legible, as Fergusson had argued, it was questionable in the first place whether these hybrid buildings could even be regarded as architecture.

In Fergusson's view the newest public buildings of nawabi Oudh were the unhappy result of the encounter of the modern styles of European Neoclassicism with the endogenous traditions of Indian architecture. In his reasoning, these buildings were debased by a basic ignorance of the grammar and vocabulary of the foreign architectural language their builders had attempted to mimic. The feebleness he perceived in those designs was material evidence of a false conception of architecture as a medium of elective representation – that is, as imitation. To Fergusson, with his essentialist bias for purity of form and structure, the hybrid buildings of nawabi Oudh illustrated the inherently unnatural miscegenation of autonomous architectures. Their builders had effectively defied their own architectural tradition in emulation of another without understanding either of them.¹⁴ The colonial expansion of Europe was enabling the colonial rulers to build a "modern"

Figure 2.3
Constantia, Lucknow,
former palatial residence
of the French adventurer,
Major-General Claude
Martin (1735–1800).
Constructed to Martin's
own designs beginning in
1795, the palace
subsequently functioned
as La Martinière School
after Martin's death in
1800.



(i.e. European) architecture *in* India, however unpromising the prospects were for doing this well in the amateurish circumstances that prevailed, but the notion of a “modern Indian architecture” was an oxymoron. “Indian” architecture was essentially different and thus necessarily other than “modern.”

Hardly a disinterested scholar of Indian architecture, the critical thrust of Fergusson's theories was nevertheless directed away from his Indian case material, with its alleged natural relationship to place and culture, to its putative opposite: what he regarded as the woefully debased state of modern architecture in Victorian Britain. Having returned to England for good in the 1840s, however, Fergusson was not in a position to observe the regionally distinctive skirmishes of the metropolitan “Battle of the Styles” of the mid-nineteenth century and its hybrid aftermath as this was played out in British India in the high Victorian heyday of colonial rule – what came to be called the “British Raj.”

HYBRID DIGRESSIONS OF THE HIGH-VICTORIAN RAJ

Although the British East India Company had been trading in the subcontinent since the early seventeenth century, and had effectively overtaken the ruling authority of the waning Mughal Empire by the middle of the eighteenth century, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that the British Crown had formally proclaimed its “Raj”, or imperial authority over India, and thereby fully assumed the obligations of a colonial government. In the years that followed, the humble, Arcadian Neoclassicism of the typical buildings of the “Company” era gave way to more and more substantial, self-consciously architectural designs.¹⁵ By the late nineteenth century, the public buildings of the high Victorian Raj had come to exhibit a conspicuously flamboyant romanticism. This was characterized by a confection of decorative features and details derived primarily from the more spectacular architectures of India's precolonial past – the palaces of the desert-dwelling Rajput princes in particular – but not excluding the inspiration of other exotic architectures of the Orientalist imagination. This so-called “Indo-Saracenic” style had found its earliest patrons among the princely Indian rulers of the nominally independent states within the enveloping geographical and political matrix of British India, but as early as the 1870s it was becoming the preferred style for the public architecture of British India as well (Figure 2.4).¹⁶

The Indo-Saracenic style had diverse manifestations, but has generally been described as a hybrid idiom of free-style Indic ornamentation and structural forms elaborated upon the generic plans of modern European building types such as colleges, hospitals and courthouses. Modeled, in some of its more sophisticated examples, on the actual Indo-Islamic synthesis that had developed in northern India under the patronage of the former Mughal Empire, the style came to be regarded as a particularly apposite means of displaying the evolving policy of the British imperial regime to outwardly assimilate its forms and its rituals to the tastes and sensibilities of its indigenous subjects. Relative to the overtly European Neoclassical and Gothic-revival styles that had been fashionable in India, as in Britain, earlier in

the nineteenth century, colonial technocrats and a growing chorus of architects and allied design professionals who sought the opportunity to build an appropriately representative architecture for British India had come to believe that the adoption of Indian historical styles with their inherent oriental splendor would impart an appropriate and politically expedient Indian character to British rule.¹⁷

However, the Indo-Saracenic tendency in the architecture of high-Victorian India was ultimately unstable and fleeting. Like the hybrid idiom itself, there was a polyvalence and ambiguity to the design intentions and reasoning that gave it form, reflecting the contingent and shifting realities of the colonial situation. The Indo-Saracenic “style” was therefore susceptible to critics with more fundamental convictions about architecture and the craft of building.

THE “CRAFTS” RESISTANCE

Although Fergusson had long since retired from India, other critically minded “amateurs” of architecture were to follow, who saw themselves directly engaged in the struggle against the pernicious consequences of modernity on the Indian



Figure 2.4
Mayo College, Ajmer. Original building begun in 1879 to designs by Major Charles Mant, with later extensions by Colonel Swinton Jacob. With its soaring clock tower overseeing a phantasmagorical confection of Rajasthani motifs, as Metcalf argues, this Eton-modeled “chiefs’ college” for the sons of the feudal Indian princes was a quintessential exemplar of the paradoxical hybridity inherent in the ideologies and cultural constructions of colonial-modern India.

frontier of Britain's expanding industrial empire. Recurring debates over the perennially unsettling question of hybridity in the context of colonial-modern cultural construction were an index of that struggle. While the politicians of empire would become increasingly engaged with questions of architectural representation as the Raj aspired to imperial maturity, critical debates among those concerned with the actual design and production of the hybrid modern buildings of colonial India were shifting away from the issue of style to focus, with ever stronger conviction, on questions of craftsmanship and method – the materiality of this novel architecture and, hence, its authenticity.

The relative wealth of recent scholarship on this particularly colorful facet of the colonial Indian discourse on architecture has familiarized us with the key agents of this crafts-oriented resistance.¹⁸ These included the art educator, John Lockwood Kipling, the father of the famous author, Rudyard Kipling; Swinton Jacob, the Chief Engineer and self-styled architect to the autonomous princely State of Jaipur; F. S. Growse, a defiantly independent-minded craft enthusiast in the Indian Civil Service; and E. B. Havell, another art educator who passionately extended the campaign for an Indian crafts revival into the early twentieth century with the empathetic collaboration of the young Anglo-Ceylonese aesthete, A. K. Coomaraswamy, the future doyen of scholar-historians of Asian art in the West.

Scholarly interest in Growse's and Kipling's relatively obscure publications and isolated interventions on the building scene of colonial India has made their vociferous but polemically entertaining antagonism to the official architecture of the Raj much better known today than it evidently was at the time.¹⁹ The Public Works Department (PWD) of British India was the villain of their critique. In their view the PWD was the principal agent of a senseless and deadly assault upon India's autonomous building traditions. The banal design norms and methods promulgated by the all-powerful PWD, as the engineer-run government agency responsible for virtually all official buildings and infrastructure in British India, epitomized what they regarded as the formal impoverishment and, above all, the inherently "anti-aesthetic" methodology of modern European building practices (Figure 2.5).²⁰ As avid craft promoters, philosophically aligned with Morris's and Ruskin's contemporaneous critique of the impact of mechanization on the decorative arts and crafts back home, they lobbied to preserve the autonomy and continuity of the craft traditions of the Indian building world. In their view, the pervasive PWD system was depriving the Indian craftsmen-builders of the official patronage on which they depended for their survival, while systematically suppressing the traditional artistry and methods of the craftsmen it engaged in order to execute the department's own banal prescriptions.

While the brunt of this polemic was directed at the baldly utilitarian output of the PWD, it is important to recognize that the crafts enthusiasts were also critical of the Indo-Saracenic style on much the same grounds.²¹ In their view the self-styled architects among the PWD's engineering cadre who had dabbled with Indic ornament had committed the same errors of ignorant appropriation that Fergusson had deplored in his critique of the debased hybrid style of early modern buildings in

nawabi Oudh. These copyists, they charged, had no genuine understanding of the underlying logic and spirit of the traditions they sought to mimic. Notwithstanding the crafts enthusiasts' own flawed attempts at a fusion, this was an essentialist argument that further reinforced the belief that the two traditions, "Indian" and "modern European," were fundamentally at odds; that East was East and West was West.²²

Paradoxically, the efforts of crafts advocates such as Swinton Jacob to transcribe and reproduce the "stone book" of traditional Indian architecture in the form of accurate measured drawings were instrumental – at least in principle – in enabling the full flowering of the Indo-Saracenic genre. The monumental *Jeypore Portfolio* – an encyclopedic six-volume compendium of Indian architectural details that Jacob and his staff methodically compiled and published in 1890 – was arguably even more influential than his prolific output of actual Indo-Saracenic buildings.²³ Together with the publications of the Archaeological Survey of India, Jacob's *Portfolio* enabled a free-style *appliqué* of Indic details to programmatically unrelated buildings, effectively disaggregating the stone text of the tradition from both its semantics and its grammatical structure (Figure 2.6). As the prosaic planning of the more superficial examples of this hybrid genre belied, however, these possibilities remained within the narrow ambit and concerns of the European preoccupation with style. Criticism of the Indo-Saracenic genre failed to address, even

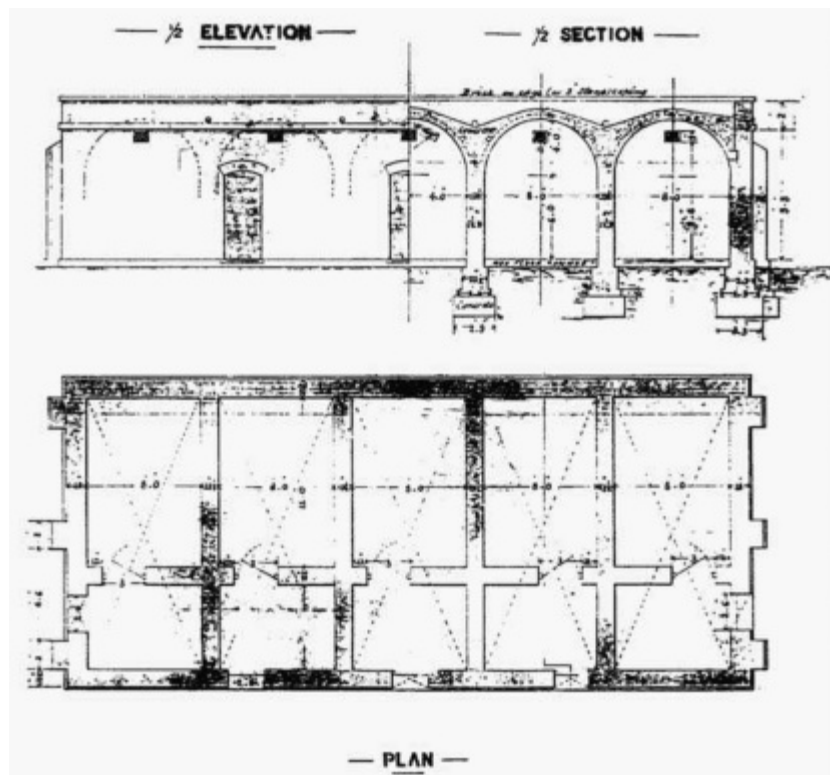


Figure 2.5
Quarters for Police and
Station Servants,
Neemuch, Neemuch State
Railway. Bombay PWD
(Railway Branch), 1879.
Note the technically
progressive use of
reinforced concrete
vaulting.

indirectly, the deeper social order of these hybrid buildings and the different building traditions they drew on – materialized as this was in the spatial syntax of physical spaces and the intimately related social practices that they framed.²⁴

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

In addition to the largely independent critical agency of the crafts lobby in India, institutional agents within the colonial bureaucracy also played crucial roles in shaping and delimiting the discourse about architecture in colonial-modern India. As we have seen, the Public Works Department (PWD) was one of the most instrumental of these institutional agents. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was another. The ASI was one of a battery of so-called “scientific departments” of the Government of India that served to address the anxiety of the regime to gain a more systematic and comprehensive knowledge of the culture and behavior of its colonial subjects.²⁵ Directly building on and extending James Fergusson’s seminal work, the ASI was established in 1862 with a mandate to survey, document and catalog the surviving architectural monuments of Indian antiquity.²⁶ By the late nineteenth century it had succeeded in institutionalizing a view of Indian architecture that strongly privileged the analysis of the material form and craft of a building as the most appropriate measures of its qualities and authenticity, or truth-value, as a cultural artifact. From this essentialist/materialist standpoint, the hybrid “modern-Indian” buildings, such as those of nawabi Oudh, that adventure-

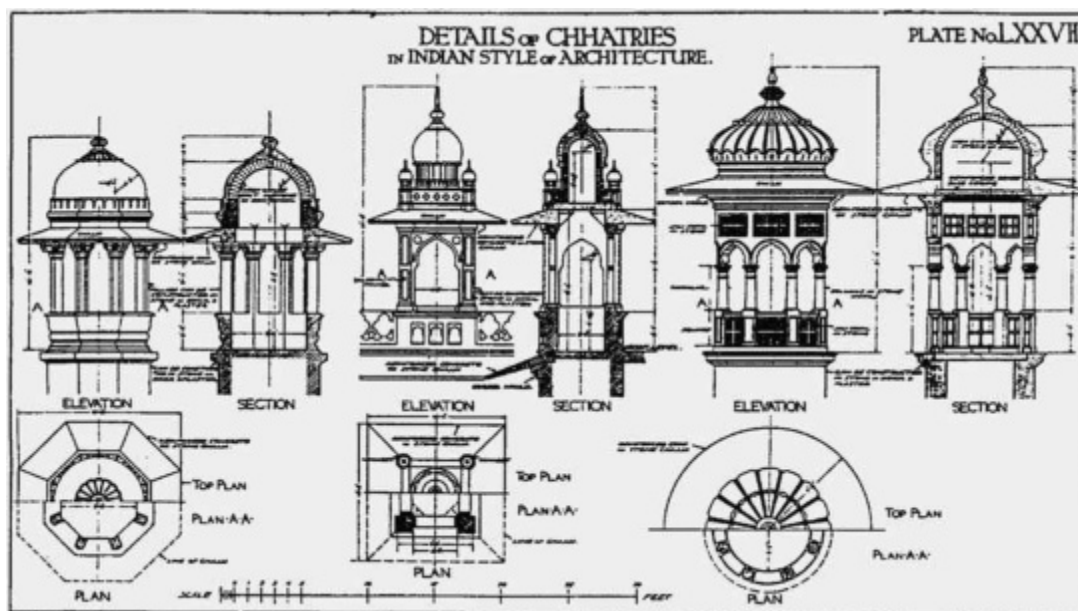


Figure 2.6

Typical construction details for simulating traditional Indian architectural motifs, as prescribed in early twentieth-century manuals of standard practices and procedures for government engineers.

some Indian patrons and builders had been producing for centuries in their colonial-modern interactions with successive European regimes were virtually ignored as the unhappy material evidence of a false premise: that is, that architecture is a medium of elective representation.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the ASI's control over the actual material fabric of India's architectural heritage was further consolidated with a vigorous conservation program.²⁷ This enabled the ASI to exercise a form of editorial control over the authenticity and interpretation of this heritage. By stripping away the hybrid accretions of time and the everyday cultural life of these buildings, the ASI conservators sought to reveal their original "stone texts" in Fergusson's sense. But in so doing, it could be argued, the ASI was effectively embalming the living tradition of Indian architecture and forcibly laying it to rest (Figure 2.7). Although fully aware that traditional Indian architectural practices were still very much alive in colonial-modern India, the department was only mandated to conserve the original material fabric of the architecture these traditions had produced historically, not the evolving cultural practices that might have sustained them.²⁸

Between its respective documentary and conservation mandates, the ASI thereby institutionalized an autonomous discourse in which the historical development of India's indigenous architectural heritage was clearly delimited. In the increasingly complex weave of colonial-modern representations into which architecture had been drawn, the paternalistic undertakings of the ASI tended to clarify and distinguish by contrast – warp to weft, as it were – the separate mandate of the Public Works Department to develop a modern (European) architecture in India tailored appropriately to Britain's evolving imperial criteria.²⁹

This bureaucratic division of knowledge and labor was further institutionalized by a strategic expansion of the staff and operations of the PWD that was implemented at the turn of the twentieth century in parallel with the expansion of the ASI to undertake archaeological conservation. Although the PWD was already an extensive organization responsible for the design and construction of almost all the buildings and infrastructure required by the colonial administration, it had previously relied exclusively on engineers for its designs. But beginning with the advent of the twentieth century and the almost simultaneous call to memorialize the late great Queen Empress Victoria, who died in 1901, a new cadre of professionally qualified architects were introduced into full-time salaried employment within the PWD. These metropolitan professionals were given a mandate to build the urbane new public buildings that would accommodate the institutions of a modern state whilst representing the authority and confidence of a global empire that had come to regard its rule in India as a legitimate and permanent relationship of inequitable differences (Figure 2.8).³⁰

From the point of view of discerning imperial technocrats attentive to the political utility of architectural representation, this unequivocal new division of labor between the respective government departments responsible for the built fabric of imperial India reasserted the essentializing distinction between the architectures of "East" and "West", of "traditional" India and "modern" Britain, that

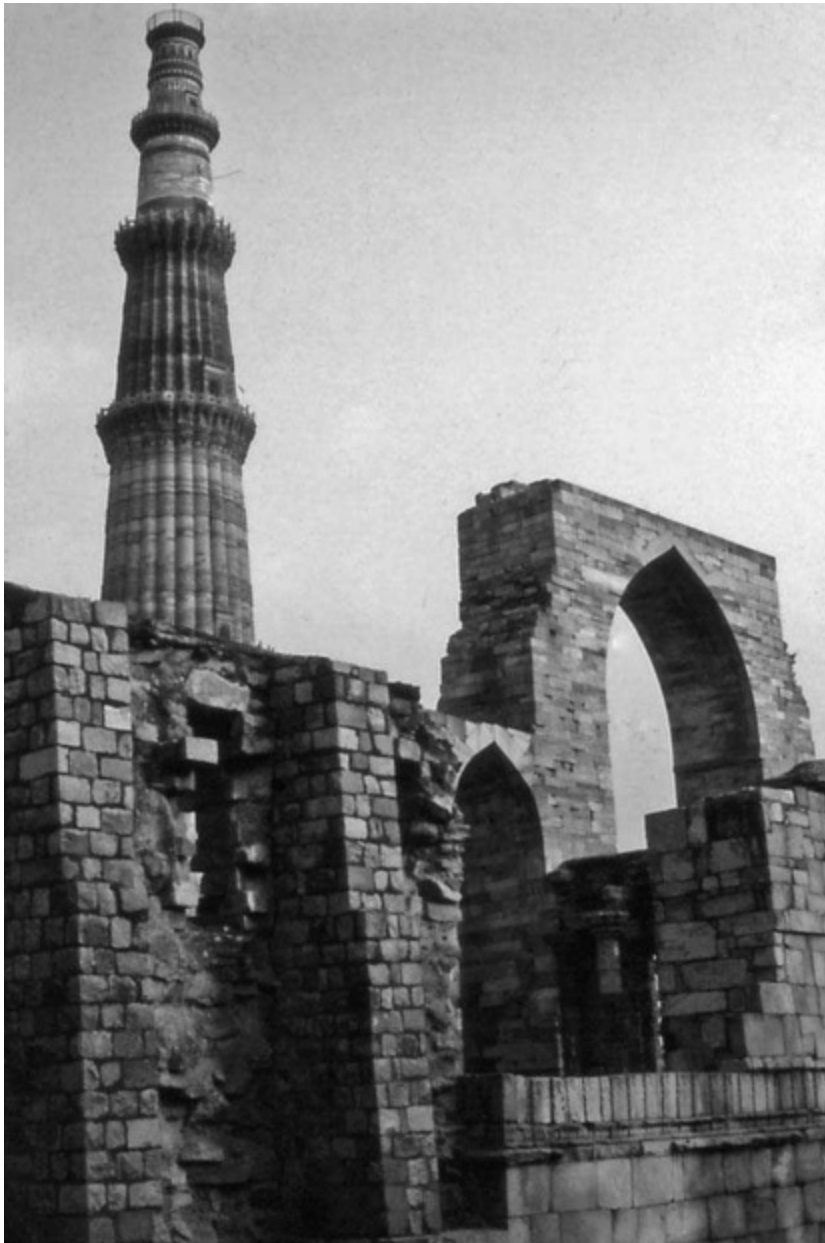


Figure 2.7
Ruins of the Qutb Minar
and Mosque (ca.
1191–1225) near Delhi, as
conserved by the
Archaeological Survey of
India.

had become confusingly blurred in the later years of the Victorian Raj. Through the final four decades of British rule, while the viceroys and their British architectural consultants held court on the construction site of imperial New Delhi, and well into the nation-building era of the new India, the sheer inertia of bureaucratic knowledge and practice would insure that these now institutionally entrenched notions of Indian versus Modern architecture would reemerge in subsequent historiography.³¹

CHRONICLES OF THE RAJ

Until the last quarter of the twentieth century, the architecture and urban design of colonial South Asia had been little documented, let alone rigorously researched. Indeed, one of the important limitations of recent scholarship in the field is that it has only had a very small body of earlier, discipline-specific literature to draw upon – namely the sporadic polemics of the crafts lobby in Victorian and Edwardian India, and a handful of informal, impressionistic accounts in the professional journals of the day.³² The late doyen of twentieth-century British architectural historians, John Summerson, ventured an explanation for this conspicuous gap in his foreword to *European Architecture in India 1750–1850* (London, 1968) by the Swedish scholar Sten Nilsson, the first substantial and genuinely scholarly work to be published on

Figure 2.8
Secretariat Building, New Patna, designed by Joseph Fearis Munnings, ARIBA, Consulting Architect to the Government of Bihar and Orissa (1912–18). The little-known work of Munnings and his fellow consulting architects in provincial PWD service was carried out in parallel with Lutyens' and Baker's work on New Delhi. Relative to those more self-important works, it is among the most complete and balanced realizations in India of the rather tame notion of an international imperial style – a proficient, workmanlike product of the global diffusion of the Neoclassical design culture of the European core, sensibly adapted to local constraints.



the topic since Fergusson's preemptive commentary a century earlier. "Could an English scholar have written this book?" Summerson queried. "The answer is 'yes,' but the fact is that no English scholar did; and the reasons for that might be sought in the embarrassing load of apprehensions, prejudices and inhibitions about India and about imperialism which most educated Englishmen carry around with them."³³

Summerson's and Nilsson's imagined readers were the generation of European architectural historians that had witnessed the dissolution of the once-vast European colonial empires in the two decades following World War II. If the ethically thorny matter of past colonialism had stigmatized them, however, such embarrassment had been evident much earlier as well. As the eminent modern-Indian historian Ranajit Guha has argued, the British were never really "at home" in their Indian Empire, regardless of their efforts to accommodate themselves, architecturally and ideologically.³⁴ But nor were their colonial subjects necessarily any more at home with the orientalist ostentation of the regime's later public architecture, and it is only recently that South Asian architectural scholars have become any less ambivalent than their British peers once were about their mutual architectural heritage in the Indian subcontinent. Through the middle years of the twentieth century, compelled still by the forward-looking impetus of India's and Pakistan's newly won independence from British rule, the material and symbolic baggage of the immediate colonial past was put aside to focus upon the redemptive anti-historicism of the modernist architecture that was then shaping the new capitals at Chandigarh, Islamabad and Dacca, as the seminal exemplars of postcolonial nation-building.³⁵

By the 1980s, however, there had been a marked inward turning in contemporary South Asian architectural design, to neo-historical forms and qualities and the inspiration of distinctive regional building traditions. A significant local manifestation of this shift in affinities was a surge of new interest among South Asian architectural educators, students and publishers in the documentation of traditional architecture and settlements.³⁶ But there were obvious parallels as well with the contemporary "postmodern" turn in European and American architectural sensibilities.³⁷ This was marked on the publishing front by a conspicuous rise in the number of new books and articles on previously taboo topics of historicist and neoconservative character, including the architecture and urbanism of the former European empires, foremost the British Indian Raj.

In the 1980s alone no fewer than ten new books were published substantially or entirely concerning the architecture of colonial India.³⁸ Two books in particular represented the respective depth and breadth of scholarship in this tide of new publications. On the one hand, Robert Grant Irving's fittingly monumental monograph on the work of Edwin Lutyens, Herbert Baker and their collaborators at New Delhi, *Indian Summer* (1981), plumbed some of the potential depth and richness of the topic. On the other hand, Philip Davies's *Splendours of the Raj* (1985) offered the most methodical and comprehensive of several comparable surveys that attempted to chronicle the development and describe the variety and extent of the broader architectural history in question.³⁹ From the vantage point of the two

intervening decades of scholarship in the parallel fields of critical history and post-colonial studies, however, the critical value of these otherwise useful art-historical contributions to the literature is limited by their relatively unreflexive Eurocentrism and almost exclusively formal concerns. Monographic studies such as Irving's contributed significantly to the reappraisal of neglected masters such as Lutyens, in both India and the West, but offered little critical insight on the issue so obviously latent in the formal and biographical content – that is, the relationship between architecture and power in colonial India – for want of a clearly articulated theoretical framework to analyze it, if not avoiding the issue altogether. Similarly, the broad-ranging but only surface-deep preoccupation of surveys such as Davies's with the attribution of authorship, style and technique offered no compelling analysis of the material and cultural contexts of colonial-modern India in which this architecture was actually built, inhabited and engaged. While the predominance of British and other Western authors among these chroniclers of the Raj was no surprise, the small but growing volume of work by South Asian authors on the colonial architectures of the subcontinent that also began to appear in the 1980s made little appreciable break from the dominant stylistic focus and intrinsically Eurocentric critiques of other contemporary surveys.⁴⁰

Although typically supported by new photographic field surveys of surviving buildings, much of the substantive research for such chronicles of the Raj and its architecture continued to be conducted, Fergusson-like, in the cool and distant isolation of the metropolitan London libraries and archives of the former British Empire. Even then, however, none of this first wave of new scholarship in the early 1980s offered a sufficiently methodical critical analysis of the reams of routine government records of official building activity in colonial India to provide much insight into the actual production of such work.⁴¹ Following an increasingly well-trodden path first blazed by Nilsson and interested nonspecialists, successive authors have repeatedly relied on the rich but largely anecdotal body of visual evidence and artistry, including architectural drawings, recorded by roving European artists, travelers and colonial officials that have been preserved in curated collections such as the Prints and Drawings Department of the Oriental and India Office Collection (OIOC) of the British Library, and the drawings collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects.⁴² Impressions of the physical and ideological complexion of colonial India related in such surveys have therefore tended to reiterate these evocative but decidedly selective views from (and to) the West, without pause to cross-examine the problematic partiality and biases of such representations with sufficient critical commitment and rigor.

Worthy as the architecture of colonial India was of the surge of scholarly attention it had finally begun to receive two decades ago, the initial reluctance of architectural historians to interpret the intriguing and often paradoxical relationships of these buildings with their colonial-modern contexts of production was conspicuous. Arguably, to date it is from the extradisciplinary viewpoints of sociology, history and even popular travel writing that some of the most thought-provoking contributions to the literature on colonial architecture in India have come.

In contrast to the selective formalist purview of art-historical accounts, sociological interest in the spatial and material cultural aspects of colonial India has been significant and long-standing, albeit focused on generic aspects of that built environment to the virtual exclusion of “architecture” as a discipline in its own right. As early as the 1970s, Anthony King’s studies of the social mapping and material culture of colonial urban and residential development in northern India provided a body of seminal theories and descriptions of the characteristic norms and forms of the colonial Indian built environment on which subsequent critical histories and analyses have continued to rely. Equally important was King’s further study of that building typology and planning model as paradigms for subsequent development throughout much of the former colonial empires, and the global culture of “bungaloid” suburbia that it ultimately spawned worldwide.⁴³

More recently, the seasoned modern-Indian historian Thomas Metcalf paved the way to a more theoretically and critically engaged historical treatment of this architecture. However, Metcalf’s Said-inflected reading of ideological construction and representation in the architecture of the Raj remains a top-down study of architectural style and the relationships between elite political patronage and elite design professionals in the making of the masterworks of British Indian architecture.⁴⁴ It still gives us relatively little insight into the effective relationships between buildings and power in the actual social space of colonial India.

On the other hand, the manner of broad-band, bottom-up readings of the colonial built environment as a form of pattern language offered by studies such as King’s are also limited in the insights they can provide regarding the actual design and production of those buildings. Due to this schismatic distinction between the “architectural text” of colonial India and its mundane “built fabric,” and the respectively distinct methods through which these putatively autonomous classes of objects have so far been studied, a very significant middle ground continues to be inadequately examined.⁴⁵

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

Among the first – and almost certainly the most widely read – of the tide of new work on the architecture of the British colonial Empire that began to appear in the early 1980s was a string of publications by the prolific travel writer and popular historical chronicler of the British Empire, Jan Morris.⁴⁶ In *Stones of Empire* (1983), Morris and collaborating photographer, Simon Winchester, offered an unabashedly impressionistic account of the built legacies of the former British Raj. Morris was intrigued to evoke, from a layperson’s point of view, how these buildings embodied the “idea of empire;” that is, as she rather facetiously explained, “... the assumption that one tribe, race, or nation might, by the brutal privilege of *force majeure*, legitimately lord it over another.”⁴⁷

When she was writing in the Britain of Margaret Thatcher in the midst of the Falklands War, a resurgence of conservative nostalgia for bygone imperial glory had generated a new thirst, both critical and popular, for knowledge of an era fast

fading from living memory. The near-forgotten architectural legacies of the British Indian Empire presented commercial authors like Morris with a rich and seemingly revealing representation of past imperial intentions and imagination at their apex. But unbridled by the art-historical criteria of the more specialized studies that came to press at roughly the same time, Morris addressed her essay to a wider and rapidly growing lay readership that was curious to reacquaint itself with an era and a context in which “the idea of Empire” was both openly and productively manifested. “Disguised nowadays in economic device or political euphemism,” she charged, imperialism had become a more covert phenomenon in the second half of the twentieth century. “[B]ut in its days of climax it was creatively explicit ...,” above all in its architecture.⁴⁸ Of course, by initiating and revalidating interest in such colonial cultural production, however, both Morris and her counterparts in British and American academia were themselves sustaining the dominance of the center over the periphery.⁴⁹

The title of Morris’s and Winchester’s book was telling. *Stones of Empire* appeared shortly after the publication of a new edition of John Ruskin’s *The Stones of Venice*, which Morris herself had edited.⁵⁰ Like Ruskin (and Fergusson, for that matter), Morris was a passionate but amateur observer of architecture who sought to “read” it as a product of everyday material culture – potentially artful but mundane all the same – which “speaks” of the larger cultural realities in which it was fashioned.⁵¹ She proposed a reading of the “stones” of the Raj as a register of the whole British colonial experience in India; what might have been called a “cultural landscape” approach in a more self-consciously academic study.⁵² In Morris’s impishly candid opinion they were rather dowdy, uncertain buildings on the whole.

British architecture in India was anything but avant-garde ... The genre, like the empire that gave it birth, went out gently, even apologetically in the end ... [It was] the sort of architecture ... [that] well suited the needs and preferences of officials and businessmen alike, and could easily be touched up with ornamental elephants, or even corner kiosks, to show willing to the indigenes. It was hardly architecture at all really.⁵³

Morris’s ambiguous though far from ambivalent reading may also be construed, in a Ruskinian vein, as an allegory about “imperialism” itself. For Ruskin, the faded commercial empire that Venice represented to the nineteenth-century observer – at the intersection of Europe and the “Orient” or, as he saw it, of North and South – was a historical paragon for the global colonial empire that was governed from Victorian London. The evidence of imperial greatness was there to be read in the architectural fabric of Venice, but so too were the warning signs of decline and decay from which Ruskin proposed the decision-makers of imperial Britain might learn.⁵⁴ Morris’s curiously sardonic tribute to the buildings of the Raj could be read in a similar allegorical fashion as a gentle satire on the latest architectural fashions and follies that were vying for attention on the skylines of “world cities” such as London, New York and Hong Kong in the 1980s. It would have been difficult for such a worldly observer to ignore the intriguing similarities between the

architectural artifice of the British Empire in its late-nineteenth-century heyday, and the contrived depthlessness that characterized much of the so-called “post-modern” neo-historicist architecture of the global marketplace, a century later, dominated as this was by multi-national corporate capitalism.⁵⁵

Of course, the burgeoning literature on colonial architecture in the 1980s was only one small facet of a more general phenomenon. Far more conspicuous indicators were the parallel publishing and broadcasting booms in literary fiction, popular histories and memoirs, films and melodramatic TV miniseries about the British Raj and other lost colonial empires of the recent past. On one level it could be argued that this renewed interest in imperialism was a form of catharsis, a readiness to finally revisit a difficult history before it slipped out of living memory, and thereby gain greater critical detachment from it. In the context of the globalizing economy of the late twentieth century, however, nostalgia for the Raj could also be regarded as a symptom of the commodification and exchange of new forms of cultural capital. The spectacle of lost empires, not least the eclectic exoticism of the late-nineteenth-century architecture of British India, was a commodity that was increasingly available “virtually” if not actually to the desiring consumer. While increasing numbers of well-heeled tourists were flocking to the Indian subcontinent for five-star “maharaja service” experiences in the neo-colonial comfort of the renovated Indo-Saracenic palace-hotels of former Indian princes, many more could now consume the architectural “splendours of the British Raj” and its princely vassals through the growing number of glossy publications.⁵⁶ The unprecedented tide of new books, exhibitions and related publications on India’s traditional architecture and crafts that appeared at that time were further indices of this shift to more flexible forms of exchange. Spectacles such as the “Festivals of India” orchestrated in Europe in the mid-1980s had sought to remarket the liberalizing economy of India to a Western world conditioned by the commercially unattractive image of a developing country that had previously attempted to develop its modern industrial capacity and consumer market in isolation.⁵⁷ Rather than second-rate generic manufactures, it was the idea and image of the unique and timeless India of old – the exotic riches and difference of the colonial other – that the media-savvy marketers of the new India and its global diaspora sought to sell.

Nevertheless, a deep-seated ideological stigma still prevails. What had been distorted in the initial postcolonial era by an embarrassed silence has been equally distorted in cultural memory since the 1980s by this commercially and politically expedient tendency to over-familiarize selected romantic images and imaginings of the colonial experience. So seductive from this aesthetic standpoint is this nostalgia for the Raj, and its exotic “other,” that the ethical problems of both imperialism and nationalism in the postcolonial context have been almost blissfully suppressed once again, and potentially even more deeply than before. For critical observers of colonial and contemporary South Asia there is a particularly worrisome correlation between this shift in the mode of representing imperial histories, and their cultural constructions, and broader shifts in the tastes and surface appearances of many of the more affluent sectors of societies worldwide since the 1980s toward racial and

nationalist heritage and its nostalgic trappings. Dramatic political developments in the 1990s, in South Asia as elsewhere, have further emphasized and exploited these atavistic affinities. Through astonishing acts of violence directed at buildings – among other conspicuous symbols of difference in cultural beliefs – these affinities have become instrumental in ways distinctly at odds with happier notions of individual freedom and civility under a liberal new world order.⁵⁸

Despite these critical concerns with nostalgia and its commodification in recent discourse, the spectacle of Empire undoubtedly produced a remarkable cultural legacy worthy of scholarly attention. As Edward Said himself consistently argued, imperialism was not only intrinsically engaged in the construction of self-serving cultures of colonial-modernity; it was also the material and conceptual framework in which some of the greatest art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was produced.⁵⁹ It is surely arguable, for instance, that Lutyens' architectural mastery as a stylist and genuine innovator in Neoclassicism found its full flowering in his imperial commissions, in India and England, at the apex of British imperial fervor. Indeed, the opportunity to plan and design on such a massive scale, and with the relative degree of artistic autonomy that Lutyens enjoyed (albeit with some inevitable compromises), would not have been possible without the extraordinary political economy of the imperial situation.

One constructive outcome of the fetishization of the architectural art of Lutyens and his peers in British India by successive chroniclers of the Raj was the stimulation of sufficient appreciation and ensuing action, privately and publicly, to initiate the conservation of the declining stock of surviving colonial buildings.⁶⁰ However, the overriding focus on the material fabric, style and iconography of these buildings in such conservation studies has tended to construct a very specific conception of their value, while their broader cultural significance, in a less elitist sense of the term, has still largely been overlooked. As Jan Morris at least attempted to evoke – but without the more discerning, theoretically and critically informed analysis the topic requires – the buildings of colonial India were inextricably engaged in the everyday social space and material culture of colonial modernity, including, but not limited to, its distinctive representational dynamics and power relations.

FRAMING HYBRIDITY: TOWARDS A CRITICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

The problem and the prospect of a more probing and critical interpretation of the architecture of colonial India can be articulated succinctly by returning, finally, to the issue of hybridity. As the most flamboyant of the architectural splendors of the Raj, the Indo-Saracenic flirtation with hybridity has been widely and variously interpreted. An impressionistic and largely anecdotal treatment of the genre in much of the literature has tended to reinforce earlier reductive assessments of that supposedly pastiche style. In the relatively more recent work of Giles Tillotson and Thomas Metcalf, however, the Indo-Saracenic has also been the focus of some of the most passionate and critically revealing debates to date, albeit with important

limitations.⁶¹ Typically the movement has been recounted as a peripheral episode in the global diffusion of the modern styles of European architecture in the nineteenth century; not the genuinely novel and radical hybrid architecture of colonial modernity that it might have been, and that some of its proponents had certainly intended.

Among the most appreciative accounts, Philip Davies has celebrated the Indo-Saracenic style as a form of romantic eclecticism which, in the best examples, also managed to be a relatively pragmatic response to climatological and construction criteria through the use of local building materials and details.⁶² But the stylistic pedigree of these splendid hybrids is never really in question. In Davies's view, they were offshoots of high Victorian eclecticism, no matter how exotic they appeared.⁶³ He was writing as a conservation historian, and the declared objective of his study was to establish recognition of these (in the West) largely forgotten buildings as a splendid but endangered corpus of Victorian and Edwardian architecture worthy of conservation – orphaned as they had been by the rupture of political history. Although Davies acknowledges that this heritage is shared by two countries with an interwoven history, the paradigmatic dichotomy one associates with Fergusson – the essentialist distinction between a timeless “tradition” of Indian architecture and its timely other (in this case the “modern styles” of Europe) – still underpins the account.⁶⁴

Of course, as Tillotson reminds us, style was the dominant issue for European architects in the second half of the nineteenth century, and consequently an abiding concern of architectural critics as well.⁶⁵ Indeed, as noted earlier, Fergusson devoted much of his own formidable energies as a critic to this fundamental impediment, as he saw it, to the continuing development of a “true” architecture in the post-Renaissance world of modern Europe.⁶⁶ To assess the Indo-Saracenic movement historically, one is compelled to interpret it in the context of the earnest debates that carried over to India from the so-called “Battle of the Styles” in the professional and the political circles of Victorian Britain.⁶⁷ But equally important was the growing awareness of the increasingly mobile design professionals of the nineteenth century of their effective freedom in an industrializing building world from the traditional architectural determinism of local building practices, materials and techniques. The question of identity – what should the building represent? – could no longer be taken for granted. While the more equivocal question of which style was appropriate for which purpose would remain an issue for heated debate, few British architects of the late nineteenth century would have denied that one of the key prerogatives of a modern building was to represent the identity of its users.

In this light, the Indo-Saracenic attempts to conceive a hybrid Indo-European idiom for the official architecture of the British Indian Raj were, and continue to be, dismissed as a disingenuous bid to represent the willing assimilation of a global power to the local cultural norms and mores of its colonial Indian empire. As the crafts advocate E. B. Havell charged, as early as 1913 in the midst of the debate over how the new viceregal capital at Delhi should be designed, preceding experiments in the Indo-Saracenic had been nothing but a “make-believe Anglo-Indian

style.”⁶⁸ Seventy years later, Jan Morris echoed much the same sentiment in her deadpan estimation of the tailings of the hybrid style in the twilight of Empire as a rather facile facade of “showing willing to the indigenes.”⁶⁹ Although Metcalf offers a more thorough and theoretically inflected analysis, he arrives at a substantially similar conclusion in his assessment of the Indo-Saracenic as a patently false representation of cultural synthesis under the imperial Raj.⁷⁰ From the fanciful Indic confections of the early princely palaces in the genre, to the increasingly earnest and archaeologically literate essays in the decorated grand manner pursued in major government buildings early in the twentieth century, Metcalf argues, the Indo-Saracenic style served to appropriate the potentially radical hybridity of a colonized society emerging into modernity, to the narrower representational concerns of the colonial modern state and its feudal vassals, complicit as they were in the self-serving political semiotics of identity construction and negotiation.⁷¹

But both the apologists and the critics of the Indo-Saracenic appear to agree that it was a decidedly “modern” style. While arguably a middling form of modernism that reflected a certain understanding of both the material and the representational function of architecture in the colonial-modern context, it could make no claim to be a genuine fusion between modern European and Indian architectures.⁷² In the opinion of the crafts advocates, as Tillotson interprets, the only way such a fusion might have been enabled was by resisting the incursion of the forms and, above all, the methods of contemporary European architecture on the Indian building scene, on the one hand, and by conserving and reinforcing the traditional building crafts and design methods of India, on the other. Only then could those crafts and methods continue to develop and adapt naturally to the new building opportunities of the emerging colonial-modern society.⁷³

But here I believe that the real question of hybridity – of genuine cultural intercourse and invention under colonialism – was ultimately averted not only in the official Indo-Saracenic experiments carried out by British architects and engineers but by the crafts resistance and its subsequent interpreters and advocates as well. As the contemporary and later critical discourse regarding the Indo-Saracenic movement reveals, the question was avoided, not by denying the possibility of a hybrid architecture (as Fergusson had), but by exclusively appropriating the privilege to invent such novel representations in India into a modern European discourse; that is, as an inherently “modern” prerogative incompatible with “tradition.”

While Metcalf and Tillotson go beyond the immediate questions of style and intention to consider aesthetic, political and methodological issues in the construction of colonial culture and the British Indian polity, their diverging interpretations of the Indo-Saracenic style once again reassert the problematic binary latent in that discourse. Metcalf is concerned almost exclusively with architectural representation and the semantics of this debate; that is, with the ideological “text” represented by figures of alterity and hybridity in the buildings in question. On the other hand, Tillotson is concerned with the materiality of the issue; with the “stone” rather than the text. Differentiating his reading from other recent interpreters, including Metcalf, Tillotson argues that the stonemasons and their methods are the key to

understanding the true nature and significance of the Indian building tradition; not its distinctive architectural forms, and iconographic programs as such. The Indo-Saracenic experiment in late colonial architecture was largely a failure, in his view, because it failed to work “bottom-up” from the material itself through the agency of the traditional craftsmen, merely mimicking the forms through a “top-down” method of prescribed designs. Following this line of argument, a genuine and worthy hybridity in design could only be achieved through a seamless – and hence seemingly impossible – fusion of traditional methods with modern programs.

The point I wish to reemphasize in drawing this critical account of the architectural historiography of colonial India to a conclusion is the strong polarization of interpretation we observe again here, between the essentialist materialism of the colonial discourse on Indian architecture, and the central issue of stylistic representation in the design of modern buildings in colonial India and in their subsequent critical assessment. This categorical division also reflects an essentialist distinction between the presumed “timelessness” of India’s building traditions – its “non-historical” styles in the sense that Banister Fletcher infamously derived from Fergusson⁷⁴ – and the manifest historicity of European building efforts in the Indian subcontinent (Figures 2.9–2.10). As we have seen, this distinction was progressively reinforced in the colonial discourse both ideologically and institutionally. But while the former “traditions” were the object of passionate scholarship throughout the colonial era, implicated as such studies were in the epistemological conquest of India, the latter “modern” developments were more often the object of critical rancor and embarrassment if they were considered at all.

The relative wealth of new literature on the architecture of colonial India in the past three decades would suggest that these attitudes have changed significantly since the end of the colonial era. However, an all too familiar pattern of



Figure 2.9
The “timeless” tradition
of Indian Architecture.
Early nineteenth-century
haveli (urban mansion)
facades in the
tourism-preserved desert
town of Jaisalmer,
Rajasthan.

Figure 2.10
The timely historicity of style. Indo-Saracenic details of the Law Courts, Madras (1888–92), designed by Henry Irwin, consulting architect to the Government of Madras, and James Stephens, assistant engineer.



intention is apparent that continues to pose problems for our fuller appreciation of this field. To be critical but genuinely productive as well, it seems to me that further contributions to this literature must begin by questioning the assumptions about the topic – “architecture” – vested in that historiographical discourse itself; to be open, that is, to alternative and more comprehensive conceptions of how architecture can be understood. Beyond questions about material form and the textlike meaning of architectural figures and surfaces, it is imperative to ask what *more* there is to a building. A crucial part of the answer is, surely, spatial structure. Questions about the material aspects of architecture, discernible through the spatial analysis of buildings and urban form, are equally related to identity, but they also tell us more about social, economic and cultural change. Such a comprehensive spatial analysis of structure and change in the built form of colonial-modern India, and its postcolonial present, has still to be written, however.

The distinctive spatial structure, or syntax, of the buildings of colonial India presents the critical scholar with a telling materialization of colonial-modern spatial production. From this point of view, multiple sub-questions arise that previous scholarship has scarcely begun to address.⁷⁵ Did imported “modern” building types organize space in such a way that imperial power was produced? Was such power reproducible simply by replicating these building types and/or their particular spatial structure? Did this “syntax” support or confuse the “semantics” of these buildings with their hybrid stylistic programs and quirks? Apart from the well-known evolution of the bungalow, were there other indigenous spatial structures that were adopted and adapted to colonial-modern uses? How did the characteristic spatial structures of the different regional and historical building traditions of India respond to and/or resist the changing spatial practices and prerogatives of colonial times? And how, in postcolonial times, have such “traditional” structures

been revalued and reinserted into the colonizers' buildings by spatial/structural transformations?

Questions such as these begin to articulate an extensive, alternative agenda for further critical research on the buildings of colonial India as a framework for observing practices of cultural construction that, in important respects, are still ongoing, not least as a function of historiographical debates about the topic itself.

Chapter 3: The Stone Books of Orientalism¹

Stephen Cairns

(INTER)DISCIPLINING ORIENTALISM

Ever since the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism*² in 1978, studying Asia in the Western academy has become a contentious enterprise. This was not always the case. Asia has long figured quite comfortably as a generalized topic in the Western academy, and since the late eighteenth century it has come under sustained scrutiny as a distinct field of investigation. Its place was cemented during the Enlightenment as an academic discipline under the heading of "Oriental Studies" or "orientalism." Often underpinned by philological scholarship, orientalism was understood to be a rigorous and properly disinterested inquiry into the histories, geographies, cultures, art practices, religions and institutions of the Orient. It was a scholarship that involved often-conflicting motivations. Romantic and rationalistic world-views portrayed the Orient as an object of everything from exotic curiosity to scientific inquiry. As historian J. J. Clarke notes, for romantically inflected scholarship, the Orient was taken to offer an opportunity for a "flight from reason" in which the Orient's supposed irrationality was seen to offer solace from the materialist and mechanistic tendencies of Enlightenment Europe. Alternatively, for rationalists, for whom Enlightenment Europe embodied a flawed and incomplete rationality, the Orient affirmed the values of rationality and science in a more profound and thorough way.³ "[T]he 'discovery' of Buddhism in the Victorian period," for instance, "resulted from the belief that it represented, by contrast with superstitious Christianity, a religion compatible with the basic assumptions of science."⁴ These various, often conflicting, intellectual colorings and tendencies were mobilized, in turn, by an assumed higher-order scholarly ethos that saw the Orient as a relatively uncharted terrain that, now "discovered," was freely available for, and indeed required, description, documentation and study. The publication of Said's book effectively revoked this licence.

Said exposed this venerable orientalism to the destabilizing force of the crisis of representation. The Orient, the long-standing object of inquiry for institutionalized

orientalism, was radically reconfigured as a result. Where it had always been understood to be present out there in some material sense, passively awaiting the scholar's benign and inquisitive gaze, Said revealed the Orient to be a representational chimera, a fantastical image projected from the Occident. He showed how long-standing and informal geopolitical knowledge of the Orient and its "basic geographical distinction" from the Occident was disseminated "into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts." In these various discursive contexts the distinction between Orient and Occident was elaborated representationally "by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description."⁵

As is now well known, Said's revolutionary insight had the effect of politicizing the production of knowledge about Asia. Far from being simply another object of inquiry for the West, Said argued, the Orient was an "internally consistent" representation produced within a relation of power.⁶ In this context the Orient functioned as the antithesis against which values of the West were defined, refined and asserted as universal norms. In this way orientalism was shown to be deeply implicated in the dominating and coercive practices of colonialism, not simply reflective of, but "creating and sustaining," the authorizing logic of those practices. For Said, orientalism manifests "a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world." While Said does not suggest that orientalism can be mapped onto political power in a direct way, he insists that it is a discourse "shaped" by power, that it "is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power," be it political, intellectual, cultural and/or moral power.⁷ Said shows these power-relations to be the very oxygen of scholarly work on Asia, and it is this insight that renders Asia such a contentious topic for the academy today.

Said's book inverted the most obvious connotations of orientalism, transforming it, in the words of one historian, "from dreamy obscurantism to the intellectual Foreign Legion of Europe."⁸ Such intellectual audacity provoked controversy and triggered a broad-ranging debate in almost all parts of the humanities. Historians argued that Said accepted too readily a simple distinction between Occident and Orient, and in so doing ossified it into a rigid and debilitating binary relation. Said's orientalism was too generalized, it was claimed, having "virtually nothing to do with the actual development of Orientalism in India," for instance, "or with the human beings who promoted it in the nineteenth century, or with Orientalism as cultural policy, social activism, and scholarly achievements."⁹ But *Orientalism* was also credited with launching a new discipline – postcolonial studies – that sought to describe and analyze the effects of colonialism and its aftermath.¹⁰ This exposed Said's conception of orientalism to sustained critical scrutiny. Not only was the Orient–Occident binary shown to be too rigid: it was also argued that, on the one hand, the force of domination across this binary is too often seen to be unidirectional (from West to East); and, on the other hand, that the moral bulwark that Said imagines to confront this force is portrayed as the exclusive prerogative of the East.

Postcolonial critics, such as Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, have, in different ways, argued to the contrary, showing that the colonial experience was never unidirectional, that it had transformative effects on both colonizer and colonized, and that the dominant and subordinate positions within Said's account of orientalism were never as stable or fixed as he makes them appear.¹¹

One of the central critiques of postcolonial studies concerned the ways in which Said mobilized the crisis of representation for his cultural-political ends. The anthropologist James Clifford famously took Said to task for his easy appropriation of certain possibilities within Foucauldian (and post-structuralist) accounts of representation, and language more specifically, without coming to grips with their more radical consequences.¹² More recently, Timothy Brennan (writing in cultural studies and comparative literature) has suggested that Said is drawn to Foucault because he finds in him an attentiveness to materiality that seemingly slips the "prison-house of language" that governs post-structuralism more generally.¹³ For Said, Foucault's philosophy of language has "its own special history, geography, and spirituality, as well as a corporeality."¹⁴ So while Said deployed Foucault's conception of language and discourse to attack the "radical realism"¹⁵ of orientalism – "at most, the 'real' Orient provoked a writer to his vision; it very rarely guided it,"¹⁶ as he argues – he also mounted a critique of what he regarded as theory's excessive "textuality" and its "retreat" from "anything that is worldly, circumstantial, or socially contaminated."¹⁷ This ambivalence between representational and material registers produces an important tension in the orientalism thesis: on some occasions orientalism is figured as a discourse that determines those imperial practices that are assumed to be material in character (the domination of the colonial territory and its indigenous subjects through the construction of physical infrastructures), while on others it is merely a superstructural effect of those imperial practices.¹⁸ Said, according to this critique, did not so much expose Orientalist scholarship to the full force of the crisis of representation as to merely harass it with a charge of representational inadequacy.

The critical reception of Said's thesis within the (sub)disciplinary spaces of the humanities is now well summarized in various sources.¹⁹ I have merely sketched some examples to contextualize my more immediate aim of considering Said's notion of orientalism from the particular disciplinary perspective of architecture.²⁰ Said's own rhetoric invites such a consideration, for although the bulk of his thesis is elaborated through analysis of one particular cultural practice, namely literature, he nonetheless assumes his thesis to be valid for all scholarly fields that touch the non-West. While he warns that there can be no "hard-and-fast rule about the relationship between knowledge and politics," and that "each humanistic investigation must formulate the nature of that connection in the specific context of the study, the subject matter, and its historical circumstances,"²¹ Said's conception of orientalism remains quite comprehensive in its ambition. Not surprisingly, this ambition produces difficulties of its own. We are left with the sense that, while Said invites us to consider possible distinctive configurations between knowledge and politics within a particular field, such as architecture, the comprehensive design of

orientalism simultaneously forecloses those possibilities. And despite the general importance of Said's thesis for the humanities, its relevance to specific disciplines such as architecture is not always self-evident. There is now a widely expressed feeling in architecture, and other disciplines that are concerned with forms of artifactual cultural production,²² that Said's concept remains most compelling for those whose scholarly horizons are determined by the analysis and criticism of literary, often historical, texts. This is not to suggest that texts, by contrast to buildings, sculptures or tools, say, do not have artifactual status. As much recent work on the history of the book has shown, texts have their own materiality (bindings, covers, parchments, pigments, etc.) that can have epistemological and discursive significance.²³ But artifacts such as buildings have an unavoidable artifactuality, a material constructedness, that presses more heavily on the way in which they are designed, made, occupied and assessed.²⁴ As a consequence, while *Orientalism* is widely cited in architecture, it is often in a gestural way that acknowledges its general importance but leaves any implications it may have for cultural production implicit.²⁵ As Hasan-Uddin Khan notes, in his recent study of modern architecture and modernization in postwar Islamic contexts, "[a]lthough very important, the attitudes and actions of Orientalist discourse fall beyond the scope" of his work in part because "Said's book presents the political and cultural arguments for its earlier aspects in the 18th and 19th centuries."²⁶

A sense of disciplinary guilt and mild self-reproach often seems to attach to the way Said is cited in architecture – he is assumed to be important but not wholly relevant, for one reason or another, to the immediate frame of analysis. This suggests that the theoretical reach and moral force of Said's thesis remain compelling, but that the question as to what form a post-Saidian architectural scholarship would take remains undeveloped. We need to ask, then: In what ways has Said's invitation been taken up in architecture to date? What are the analytical gains and losses in architecture's existing engagements with Said? And how might his orientalism thesis be reconfigured so that it might be amenable to consideration through architectural styles of thinking? In exploring these questions, I want to keep in mind what might be called architecture's split disciplinary personality. This manifests as a kind of artifactual mode of cultural production that requires investment in both the materiality of its privileged object, the building, and in the projective, speculative and propositional modes of representation necessary for its conception. The material processes of making a building are always, and usually awkwardly, implicated in the imaginative and rhetorical work (via drawings, sketches and models) that is required to conceive of it – and vice versa.

Any disciplinary investment must, of course, orient the way in which interdisciplinary dialogues and exchanges are made. For instance, anthropologist Nicholas Thomas's response to Said's invitation has been to argue for placing orientalism within a much more diverse and finely tuned historical, material and circumstantial context, so as to further specify (what he sees as) the "generalizing strategy" of postcolonial criticism.²⁷ In his engagement with orientalism, Thomas plays out one of the central problematics of his own discipline, namely, the reconciliation between

site-specific ethnographic data and anthropological theory. But his position also seems to represent a new kind of orthodoxy in the assessment of Said's work, in which it is praised for its reach and scope but is reprimanded for its lack of specificity. The application of supplementary specificity, contextuality, empirical detail to Said's thesis can serve as a defensive refuge from the theoretical challenges that he makes – an argument I will return to below. But, more to the point, the unreflective adoption of a new orthodoxy of the specific, local, or contextual (whether historical or geographical) as a way of bringing Said up to date is not necessarily so useful in relation to the particular disciplinary investments architecture has in the specific, local or contextual. As I have suggested, for architecture this involves a certain doubled orientation that entails simultaneous consideration of the specific and the general, the material and the abstract, the empirical and the theoretical. This necessarily sensitizes and predisposes us towards similar kinds of tensions in Said's orientalism.

It is not surprising, then, that an architectural view of orientalism would be drawn first to the tension between the material and discursive registers in Said's thesis. My interest in architecture's disciplinarity is not intended merely to assert a sense of disciplinary autonomy. But, as I have suggested through the example of Nicholas Thomas's anthropology, the reception of Said in the humanities inevitably betrays specific (sub)disciplinary investments, whether this be in the form of a methodological emphasis, an epistemological accent, or a theoretical coloring. Rather than adopting an existing, humanities-style framework by default, I aim to explore Said's invitation to extend the orientalism thesis from a self-consciously architectural view in order to examine the consequences this might have for an inquiry into the question of artifactual cross-cultural production.

ARCHITECTURE AND ORIENTALISM

There have been various attempts to address the relationship between architecture and orientalism in historical studies since the publication of *Orientalism*. This work is well represented by Thomas Metcalf's study of British architecture in colonial India,²⁸ and by Mark Crinson's discussion of architecture of the Victorian period and its relation to orientalist themes, styles and influences.²⁹ In Metcalf's case the relation between Said's orientalism and architecture is articulated in a more-or-less implicit way. Metcalf cites Said briefly and approvingly as he establishes the aims and theoretical tone of his book. He writes that architecture in the colonial Indian context is "concern[ed] with political effect," that his aims are to examine "how political authority took shape in stone, and how, in turn, these colonial buildings helped shape the discourse on empire of the later nineteenth century,"³⁰ and that his central hypothesis is that "[i]n the public buildings put up by the Raj it was essential always to make visible Britain's imperial position as ruler, for these structures were charged with the explicit purpose of representing empire itself."³¹ For Metcalf, architecture "was but one manifestation of an interconnected structure of power and knowledge that informed colonialism everywhere."³²

Crinson, by contrast with Metcalf, is more explicit and discerning in the way he wrestles with the consequences of the orientalist for architecture. While he acknowledges the importance of Said's thesis in politicizing cross-cultural knowledge production, he warns against the potential it has for "homogenizing" orientalist objects of inquiry. It is a process that tends to make such objects "mere examples of an orientalist discourse," he cautions, "rather than differentiated expressions – perhaps even ambiguous, compromised or ineffective – of the various forms taken by colonialism, some of which may be far from hostile to colonized cultures."³³ Crinson suggests that we must be wary of the tendency of Said's conception of orientalism "to collapse the fractured qualities and strengths and perhaps significant positions of its objects in one essentializing discourse entirely owned by the colonizer."³⁴ Here he invokes Nicholas Thomas's idea of the "project," as a means of circumventing the "homogenizing" threat Said's orientalism poses for the analysis of architectural objects.³⁵ The project, in Thomas's terms, is "a socially transformative endeavor that is localized, politicized and partial, yet also engendered by longer historical developments and ways of narrating them."³⁶

A similar notion to the project is elaborated in critical historical work by Zeynep Çelik³⁷ and Timothy Mitchell³⁸ on the genre of exposition architecture. Each of these authors deals in different ways with the architectural representations of Islamic cultures in European and American World Expositions of the nineteenth century. Their focus on exposition architecture, in which orientalist buildings were constructed theatrically, often with facade reproductions of vernacular forms, covering generic entertainment or pseudo-scientific exhibition facilities behind, usefully demonstrates one characterization of orientalism as a fantastical projected image.³⁹ Neither Çelik nor Mitchell presents particularly detailed accounts of actual orientalist architecture, but each emphasizes orientalism as a larger epistemological and political project through this particular architectural genre. The work of Çelik and Mitchell is quite different from that of either Crinson or Metcalf because it represents a more theoretically motivated analysis of the legacy of colonialism in architecture. At the same time, these theoretical insights are enabled by their focus on a very particular genre of architecture – exposition architecture – whose theatrical characteristics seem ideally suited to Said's thesis.

Each of these works contains valuable examinations of different kinds of architecture in the context of Said's thesis. But their formulation of this relationship poses two, almost symmetrical, dilemmas. On the one hand, the application of more and more historical qualifications (in the case of Crinson and Metcalf) tempers the theoretical force of Said's orientalism. On the other hand, a primary loyalty to the Saidian conceptual framework and vocabulary (in the case of Çelik and Mitchell) undervalues the materiality, or at least the specific artifactual qualities, of the architecture in question. It is interesting to note that for David Kopf, a figure committed to the critique of Said's conception of orientalism, Metcalf does not qualify Said enough. Kopf, in reviewing Metcalf's book, chides him – "a veteran scholar ... who was always an open-minded historian of the British period" – for his overenthusiastic adoption of the Saidian framework by "lumping everything British

in India, from art to architecture, under the rubric of Orientalism."⁴⁰ Tellingly, Kopf argues that obvious traditional architectural categories and qualities such as "structures and styles" are dissolved in this subsumption. By suggesting that "political authority took shape in stone," Metcalf "reduces British architecture in India to the embodiment of imperialism." And, to Kopf's further irritation, Metcalf seems to renounce the study of architectural history by "reminding the reader again and again that his book on architecture in British India is not about 'aesthetic quality' but deals with the 'relationship between culture and power.'"⁴¹

Either way, two kinds of dilemma are presented by these works on orientalism and architecture: one emphasizes architecture in oriental contexts (Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Istanbul, Cairo) with the effect that the theoretical force of the orientalism thesis becomes diluted (even when, as in Metcalf's case, it is enthusiastically adopted); the other, by selecting an architectural genre that conforms too readily to Said's thesis, simplifies the intricate play of architecture's material and representational dimensions. Without material ballast, architecture tends to function as a kind of representational medium, imagined to be the mute carrier of the imperatives of colonial power. These are relatively exclusive positions, so that the relation between representation and materiality, between empirical specificity and theoretical construct, becomes a debilitating tension when considering the architectural implications of the orientalism thesis.

John MacKenzie's book *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*⁴² is distinctive in the terrain of post-Saidian approaches to architecture because it attempts to explore grounds for contact between Said's critique of orientalism and architecture as a distinctive discipline – whilst keeping active those more traditional artifactual interpretive categories that Kopf would recognize (such as aesthetics, structure, style, architectural history). MacKenzie takes a comparative approach that focuses respectively on art, architecture, design, music and theater in order to "examine the extent to which the Orientalist thesis can be revised in more positive and constructive ways."⁴³ Although MacKenzie's discussion of orientalism is in many ways the most conservative of those addressed here, it usefully informs the questions I have been examining because it is premised on the distinctiveness of the arts, both in its plurality – music, painting, sculpture, architecture – and its singularity as "the arts."

For MacKenzie – taking up a critique first made by Bhabha – interpretations based on Said's conception of orientalism are ill equipped to handle the hybrid products of Western representations and adaptations of the cultural artifacts of the East. Furthermore, he argues, orientalism "takes disturbingly a-historical forms," so much so that "we find moral condemnation befogging intellectual clarity and at times negating the essential characteristics of the critical faculty."⁴⁴ In this, Said is admonished for not being prepared to acknowledge the "benefits" of orientalist scholarship. MacKenzie's central thesis hinges on his contention that "the arts and dominant political ideologies tend to operate in counterpoint rather than conformity." He suggests that because Said "fails to recognise" this, he cannot concede the possibility that "[i]t is from the arts that a counter-hegemonic discourse invariably emerges."⁴⁵ Where Said is intellectually predisposed to allocating a place for

the arts within an overarching orientalist logic of domination, MacKenzie would ask us to imagine the arts as emancipatory cultural practices that broach cross-cultural sympathies, if not understandings.⁴⁶ This is a novel argument on the terrain of orientalist writing on architecture and the arts.

MacKenzie's general critique of Said's orientalism is elaborated through individual chapters on art, architecture, design, music, and theater. Of the architectural examples MacKenzie discusses, most are in Britain – he makes only occasional reference to examples outside Britain such as Indo-Saracenic style architecture in India. He describes in great detail various motifs, forms, patterns, colorings and surfaces from Mughal, Chinese, Egyptian and Arabic origins, as they are mingled with Gothic and Classical architectural styles in such unlikely places as Cheshire, Kew, Liverpool, Brighton and Glasgow. Despite the ubiquity of orientalist examples in architecture, MacKenzie suggests that there was no real "movement" we could name orientalist architecture. Rather, orientalism figured in Britain as a set of divergent "stylistic fads and fancies" which amounted to episodic "explorations of the exotic possibilities of the architecture of other cultures."⁴⁷

MacKenzie offers a number of reasons that might account for orientalism's relatively slight impact in Europe, such as the "sheer range of eclectic experimentation" and worries about the "climatic and cultural, religious and geographical suitability"⁴⁸ of orientalist architecture for European situations. Relative to the central concerns of nineteenth-century architectural theory – such as the "battle of the [Gothic and Classical] styles" – "the Orientalist interest constituted a set of relatively minor, geographically distant and virtually unrelated skirmishes."⁴⁹ By contrast, the decorative and landscape arts of the nineteenth century were profoundly and thoroughly influenced by forms and motifs of the Orient. "[W]hile the Orient seemed to have little influence on overall architectural form, interest in the motifs and materials of its arts and crafts transformed decorative elements, interior design and the contents of buildings." Architects "appeared merely to flirt with the East, while designers passionately embraced it."⁵⁰ Orientalism, for MacKenzie, operates at a more intimate scale within the built environment, with little public and collective presence, but finding fuller and more exuberant expression in the interiors of otherwise conventional architectural forms,⁵¹ and in oriental garden design, which "represented a liberation from the formalism of Palladianism, the heavy luxuriance of the baroque, the rigidities of the formal garden or the extensive pseudo-wildness of its landscaped successor."⁵²

In his examination of this work, MacKenzie aims to demonstrate the "counter-hegemonic" potential of the arts, and to reveal an orientalism that was more "productive and constructive" than Said allowed. He argues that orientalism functioned to enliven a dull, limited and confused Western architectural and design discourse, offering formal "relief" from "the rigidities of classical rules."⁵³ This general argument is supported by numerous examples of interaction, hybridization and "continuity" between the arts of the Occident (i.e. Britain) and the Orient.

Perceived oriental forms, however misinterpreted, were a repeated source of inspiration, offering new routes out of architectural reaction. What emerged were not copies, the constant bugbear of the architectural commentator, but new styles infused by the design values and sometimes the spirit of another age or culture. With an architect like [Alexander] Thomson or a commentator like [James] Fergusson, there is no doubt that oriental forms, albeit “dead” ones, were being handled with sensitivity and respect, as major lessons and opportunities for modern architects. As with art, architecture offers very little evidence of a monolithic binary discourse, separating Self from Other through inimical cultural statement.⁵⁴

Where Said posits only irreconcilable difference, MacKenzie offers evidence of positive continuities and invigorating hybridities between East and West. Orientalism does not function so much as the cultural accomplice of colonial power as opening “new routes,” “new styles,” “inspiration,” “lessons and opportunities” for architecture in the West, he concludes.

But what does MacKenzie sacrifice in making this conclusion? His chapter on architecture offers a comprehensive catalog of orientally inflected buildings in the West that claim to embody such “lessons,” “inspirations,” “opportunities.” By reading such examples as positive cultural effects, he avoids Said’s most demanding thesis: that orientalist cultural forms operate precisely as a form of evidence, a self-confirming evidence that ossifies otherness as a set of stock clichés – exotic, erotic, novel, etc. – that serves the interests of the West. The weight of architectural evidence, rather than refuting Said’s central thesis, precisely proves it. It is architecture in the West that gains much through the contact with the Orient – new stylistic inspirations, etc. In his haste to bridge the chasm Said opens up between Self and Other, West and East, he inadvertently confirms only the western Self. In this analysis, clearly, it is the West that benefits from cultural enrichment.

THE INDO-EUROPEAN CONCEPT

But more than his theoretical claims about the distinctive arts and how they exemplify orientalism’s benefits, MacKenzie’s observations on the inter-medium channels by which orientalist motifs and forms found their way into the domestic interiors and gardens of the West are suggestive for the questions I posed above on the disciplinary inflections that might be given to the orientalism thesis. MacKenzie shows that designers rather than architects embraced orientalism more fully. We can extrapolate from this that the media with which individual designers and architects operated were in some way implicated. This is to suggest that media and supports such as paper and paint, fabric and thread, clay and glaze, with which designers worked were more amenable to orientalist expression than more permanent architectural materials such as stone, iron, timber, slate.

How might this theme of the inter-medium be inspected more closely? One of the architectural writers MacKenzie cites offers an approach to this question. MacKenzie refers to James Fergusson’s description of Indian architecture as a “stone book,” “a means whereby Indian history could be unlocked and elucidated.”⁵⁵

MacKenzie goes on to suggest – along the lines we are already familiar with – that Fergusson is alluding to a set of possible architectural “lessons” in the “underlying principles of eastern architecture” that could assist the West to “escape from the groove of the classical and the Gothic.”⁵⁶ I want to adopt MacKenzie’s interest in convoluting the binary between Occident and Orient, and his interest in developing a productive account of orientalism. But I also want to put to one side the traditional and cumbersome division of the arts along hardened medium-specific lines he employs, and his theoretical conclusions about the benefits of orientalism, in order to examine this idea of the stone book more closely.

Fergusson’s idea of Indian architecture as a stone book takes us back to an inaugural moment in modern orientalism. Fergusson’s writing on Indian architecture drew on the work of William (“Asiatic”) Jones, a figure associated with the launching of orientalism as a proper field of academic investigation in the late eighteenth century – some ninety years before Fergusson was writing. The interesting thing about this intellectual link is that it was forged in and through a discussion of architecture. Architecture was already centrally placed within Jones’s work, so Fergusson was not interpreting earlier orientalist scholarship in a different discipline but was developing architectural themes already present within it. Let me elaborate this point by describing Jones’s orientalist project.

William Jones was a colonial administrator in the service of the British East India Company who had a particular talent for foreign languages. Jones’s most innovative theoretical contribution was what he called the Indo-European concept, or the Aryan thesis, the seminal implications of which earned him eventual recognition as “the Father of Indology.”⁵⁷ The Indo-European concept was first elaborated in a paper delivered to the Asiatick Society (which Jones himself founded) in Calcutta in 1786 – the paper was later published in the Society’s journal *Asiatick Researches* in 1806. One particularly famous and often-cited passage encapsulates the thesis:

The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit* [...].⁵⁸

Jones proposed a common source for the languages of Europe and India, and so implied a common ancestral culture too. He proposed that “the Persians, Indians, Romans, Greeks, Goths, and ancient Egyptians or Ethiopians spoke the same language and professed the same popular religion.”⁵⁹ Jones’s form of orientalism shockingly eclipsed received characterizations of Indian civilization, based on travelers’ and missionary writings, as heathen and savage. For many commentators, particularly those who sought to defend traditional understandings of the orient-

alist project in the face of Said's critique, Jones's thesis was built on a "brilliant perception" that marks "the starting point of modern comparative philology."⁶⁰ As evidence, they point to Jones's concern to demonstrate the sophistication of Indian civilization in European terms. One consequence of Jones's work was that Europe quite suddenly became aware of an ancient culture that seemed to rival, if not transcend, the civilizational standards of more familiar biblical and classical periods.⁶¹ This served to renew belief in the long-held biblical doctrine – as outlined in the book of Genesis – of a single source of human civilization. Jones's work effectively triggered an explosion in interest in Indic studies in Europe.

Said too acknowledges the importance of Jones's work. But for him it represents not so much an enlightened appreciation of a different civilization, as the "refinement" of "techniques for receiving the Orient" in the West, and the expansion in scope of the coercive and repressive powers of orientalism.⁶² Almost as soon as Jones arrived in India, Said says, he "began the course of personal study that was to gather in, to rope off, to domesticate the Orient and thereby turn it into a province of European learning."⁶³ For Said, Jones was driven by "an irresistible impulse always to codify, to subdue the infinite variety of the Orient to 'a complete digest' of laws, figures, customs, and works."⁶⁴

Said cites precisely that same famous passage from Jones on Sanskrit and its evident proximity to a common Indo-European source language. But what he does not discuss is the specific methodology that Jones developed to "codify" and "domesticate" the evidence of cultural difference he confronted. There are two things to note in this regard. First, although Jones believed language to be indispensable for proper orientalist scholarship, he was sceptical about the powers of language to access Indian cultural knowledge: "I have ever considered languages as the mere instruments of real learning, and think them improperly confounded with learning itself."⁶⁵ Second, as I have suggested, the interesting thing about Jones's orientalist project is that architecture features quite centrally in it. Jones sees architecture as one of the "four general media" by which we might "satisfy ... our curiosity" concerning Indian history. Temple architecture, furthermore, features in his promotion of the relative merits of Indian civilization. So the famous passage cited above is not a stand-alone encapsulation of orientalism (whether "good" or "bad") but rests within a much larger system of evidence. Such a system is required because, in Jones's view, Indian history "is involved in a cloud of fables," and that knowledge of local language by itself is inadequate to the task of elucidating it. The four media are "first, their *Languages* and *Letters*; secondly their *Philosophy* and *Religion*; thirdly, the actual remains of their old *Sculpture* and *Architecture*; and fourthly, the written memorials of their *Sciences* and *Arts*." Jones outlines each source of evidence in turn. This is his discussion of architecture:

The remains of *Architecture* and *Sculpture* in *India*, which I mention here as mere monuments of antiquity, not as specimens of ancient art, seem to prove an early connection between this country and *Africa*. The pyramids of *Egypt*, the colossal statues described by *Pausanias* and others, the Sphinx, [...] indicate the style and mythology of the same indefatigable workmen

who formed the vast excavations of *Canárah*, the various temples and images of *Buddha*, and the idols which are continually dug up at *Gayá*, or in its vicinity. The letters on many of these monuments appear, as I have before intimated, partly of *Indian*, and partly of *Abyssinian* or *Ethiopick*, origin; and all these indubitable facts may induce no ill-grounded opinion, that *Ethiopia* and *Hindustan* were peopled or colonized by the same extraordinary race [...].⁶⁶

Although Jones's orientalism is grounded in a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit, he sees the limitations of language as medium for the transmission of reliable historical data, and turns to evidence with more longevity in architecture and sculpture. In this instance Jones uses architectural and racial evidence to demonstrate relations between India and Egypt – regarded as the cradle of European civilization. Language and architecture are intersected to produce a quite literal “stone book.”

This argument is immediately sanctioned in a discipline-specific way by the architect William Chambers, who published alongside Jones in the same volume of *Asiatick Researches*.⁶⁷ Chambers rehearses Jones's suspicion of myth, poetry and language, and affirms his privileging of architecture as a suitable medium for the transmission of historical evidence. In one passage Chambers gives an account of the origins of the Mahabalipuram temple complex as it is described in the Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*. Having cited a long section from the *Mahabharata*, he then discusses the reliability of this literary evidence.

It is not, however, improbable, that the rest of this history may contain, like the mythology of *Greece* and *Rome*, a great deal of real matter of fact, though enveloped in dark and figurative representations. Through the disguise of these we may discern some imperfect records of great events, and of revolutions that have happened in remote times; and they perhaps merit our attention the more, as it is not likely that any records of ancient *Hindoo* history exists but in this obscure and fantastic dress. Their poets seem to have been their only historians, as well as divines; and whatever they relate, is wrapped up in this burlesque garb, set off, by way of ornament, with circumstances hugely incredible and absurd, and all this without any date, and in no other order or method, than such as the poet's fancy suggested, and found most convenient. Nevertheless, by comparing names and grand events, recorded by them, with those interspersed in the histories of other nations, and by calling in the assistance of ancient monuments, coins, and inscriptions, as occasion shall offer, some discoveries, may, it is hoped, be made on these interesting subjects.⁶⁸

Architecture, then, functions as a kind of indispensable form of evidence in this nascent orientalism. Where “poets [are the] only historians,” and where “history exists [only in an] obscure and fantastic dress,” then the orientalist scholar – including Jones and Chambers – must turn to architecture as a basis for authoritative statements on India, and, furthermore, on the possibilities for an Indo-European civilization.

DIAGRAMMING SAID'S MATERIALISM

The question of orientalism and architecture has tended to be understood as one of translation from a set of critical insights made in relation to primarily literary sources to their consequences for the built environment. But a closer scrutiny of certain key orientalist texts shows that architecture was already central to the enterprise. So the question of architecture's relation to orientalism should not simply be understood in terms of a belated intellectual inquiry. But, more significantly, we find architecture deployed in one of orientalism's canonical scenes as a means of circumventing the frailties of representation. Architecture's all-too-evident materiality gives Jones, Chambers and, later, Fergusson cause to believe that it is not subject to the same drift of signification that, in the late twentieth century, heralded the crisis of representation. It is as if this architectural "text," so self-evidently wrought in stone, was deployed as ballast in the space of representation so that an irreducible and knowable origin point for Indo-European civilization might be authorized. This is an instance of the "radical realism" that Said identifies at the heart of orientalism.

Said's analysis is, of course, mobilized by another, post-structuralist, conception of reality in which the structure of representation, through its supposed unmotivated relation to the world of things – its drift – is said to be in crisis. The literature on architectural orientalism discussed above tends to endorse one or other of these conceptions of reality: architecture of representation in which its indeterminate relation to the material world enables it to function as a mute medium that channels the imperatives of colonialist power, or architecture of radical realism whose self-evident materiality embodies historical empirical data that temper the theoretical claims of orientalism. While we can no longer go along with the orientalist understanding of architecture as an authoritative form of data that underwrites the case for an Indo-European civilization, nor can we simply figure it as functioning subserviently within some larger orientalist logic, smoothly transposing imperialist discourse into material form. We can enable an architectural account of orientalism only by establishing some kind of economy between these two characterizations of reality.

Said's own hesitation around post-structuralist accounts of representation offers a way into this issue. As we have seen, Said suggests that such accounts offer too easy a "retreat" from the worldly ballast of circumstance.⁶⁹ His theoretical project is conceived precisely to avoid such a fate. Said's methodology in *Orientalism* involves "analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in culture at large."⁷⁰ Critical cross-cultural scholarship, for Said, means paying attention to the materializing or hardening of certain texts in specific worldly circumstances.

The idea of a set of texts that acquire mass and density and so circulate in the world is indebted to Foucault's notion of the "repeatable materiality" of discursive statements.⁷¹ Foucault uses this phrase to refer to the means by which discursive statements acquire a certain stability and reliability, hence "materiality," and so

become mobile and transmissible entities that are able to shift from one institutional space to another while effectively retaining their form, hence “repeatable.” The concept of a repeatable materiality gives Said’s account of orientalism its theoretical force because it is the mechanism that explains how apparently ephemeral textual representations, from novels to government reports, can come to have a material efficacy in relation to the exercise of colonial power on the ground.

Yet, in Said’s hands the liminal character of Foucault’s repeatable materiality takes on a more black-and-white quality. Having invoked Foucault’s concept, he reads orientalist representations more conventionally as theatrical costumes that cover actual material conditions. The representations of orientalist scholars, he argues, “are to the actual Orient ... as stylized costumes are to characters in a play; they are like ... the particolored costume worn by Harlequin in a *commedia dell’arte* play.”⁷² The understanding of representation as a form of theatrical dress camouflaging a more substantial reality is invoked repeatedly and consistently throughout *Orientalism*. The telling thing about this is that Said’s characterization of representation resonates quite precisely with those of Jones and Chambers. For them, historical representations in India are “involved in a cloud of fables,”⁷³ are “wrapped up in ... burlesque garb,”⁷⁴ and “exist ... in obscure and fantastic dress.”⁷⁵ As we have seen, these orientalists have recourse to architecture precisely to circumvent the supposed unreliability of representations such as these. While Said critiques this kind of realism, his own account of representation is indebted to the same logic. Architecture is configured in a surprisingly consistent way here. It could be positioned as the bedrock of authenticity on two diametrically opposed sides of an argument. Architecture’s peculiar status with regard to representation, quivering as it does between material and representational realms, makes it amenable to such fluid deployment.

But Foucault’s repeatable materiality is itself a concept whose materiality is metaphorical. As he points out, this materiality is unencumbered by the inertia of a “trace or mark.” It is perhaps when Foucault himself engages with architectural forms quite directly in his later work that the metaphorical materiality that gives his concept of discourse its coherence and stability becomes convoluted with a more literal sense of the material.

The best-known example of Foucault’s engagement with an architectural form is, of course, his analysis of Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon in *Discipline and Punish*.⁷⁶ The Panopticon serves as an example of what Foucault calls a “diagram.” This concept (which in fact describes a kind of resistance to conceptual thinking) resonates with the idea of a repeatable materiality. But it emerges in the context of a facet of Foucault’s work that featured architectural forms, and subsequently gained notoriety through Gilles Deleuze’s interpretation of it in his book on Foucault.⁷⁷ In that book, Deleuze suggests that Foucault’s handling of the dynamic between discursive and non-discursive conditions, as outlined in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, is further complicated in *Discipline and Punish*. The key innovation that Deleuze diagnoses in this process is the breaking down of the rigid distinction between “the articulable” (discursive) and “the visible” (non-discursive).

This moment in Foucault's work is marked by the idea of the diagram. The diagram stands in a particular relation to material form and social function. According to Deleuze's analysis, Foucault's Panopticon has a "form" in two senses: a form that "organizes matter," and a form that "finalizes functions and gives them aims."⁷⁸ So architectural forms such as the prison, but also "the hospital, the school, the barracks and the workshop," are what Deleuze calls "formed matter," whereas formalized functions consist of "punishment ... care, education, training, or enforced work." Deleuze argues that the necessary "coadaptation" between material form and social function, each of which is irreducible to the other, "lies in the fact that we can conceive of pure matter and pure functions, abstracting the forms which embody them."⁷⁹ The Panopticon is significant in his reading because Foucault either "sees it as an optical or luminous arrangement that characterizes prison, or he views it abstractly as a machine that not only affects visible matter in general (a workshop, barracks, school or hospital as much as a prison) but also in general passes through every articulable function."⁸⁰ The Panopticon, then, stands for a dynamic process whereby "unformed and unorganized matter and unformalized, unfinalized functions" come to take abstract *and* concrete form. Foucault called the abstract machinic quality of specific material forms a "diagram," that is, a "functioning, abstracted from any obstacle ... or friction [and which] must be detached from any specific use."⁸¹

Understood in this way, architecture is not so amenable to being translated into Saidian terms. Rather than being an efficient medium for translation, architecture forms a kind of blockage in Said's project, so that its broader interdisciplinary ambitions become convoluted. The existing scholarship on architecture that does deploy Said in a relatively immediate way remains important in the task of configuring contemporary approaches to cross-cultural scholarship in this field. At the same time, viewing *Orientalism* through a disciplinary lens suggests that cross-cultural scholarship in architecture also requires another kind of enquiry; one that pays attention to the peculiar status of architecture within the larger system of cultural production. Architecture, it might be argued, calls up within Said's orientalism project an alternative way of handling theory and materiality. It provokes a transmutation of orientalism as a discursive condition to a diagrammatic one. This would be to insist that the stone books of orientalism – the architectures that Jones and Chambers ruminated upon – might themselves be understood as diagrammatic conditions. Because every diagram is "a spatio-temporal multiplicity" that is "highly unstable or fluid, continually churning up matter and functions in a way likely to create change,"⁸² it escapes the problem of representation as it is configured in relation to the orientalism thesis, both by Said himself and by those who have sought to think about it architecturally. At the same time, it offers a future-oriented perspective on orientalism in which the creative practices of architecture, mobilized as they are through the ephemeral arts of drawing (and diagramming), might be brought to bear on the political dimensions of ongoing processes of cultural production in cross-cultural situations.

Part II

Institutional Frameworks

Chapter 4: Empire-Building and Thinking in the Public Works Department of British India

Peter Scriver

SCAFFOLDING OR SKELETON?

The language of building furnished the promoters and apologists of Empire with some of their most cherished metaphors. As one elder statesman of Indian colonial service proposed in a statement to Parliament in 1873, the administrative infrastructure of British India "... was but a provisional temporary arrangement, ... a sort of scaffolding which [has] been erected until the edifice of our Indian Empire is completed. And as it is completed," he argued, pursuing the logic of his metaphor, "... that scaffolding should be taken down"¹ (Figure 4.1).

In the Victorian heyday of the British Raj, the Public Works Department of the Government of India (PWD) was a prime, even literal, exemplar of this metaphorical "scaffolding" of empire. As the technical branch of the colonial administration, it had rapidly produced a ubiquitous array of utilitarian buildings and infrastructure through which the British were significantly restructuring the Indian subcontinent, both spatially and technologically. By the early twentieth century, however, these works and buildings had acquired a far more structural connotation. What had been regarded at first as merely provisional installations had become a permanent

Figure 4.1
"Temporary" barracks and office accommodation erected by the PWD in the early construction stages of New Delhi, ca. 1920s, under demolition in 1990.



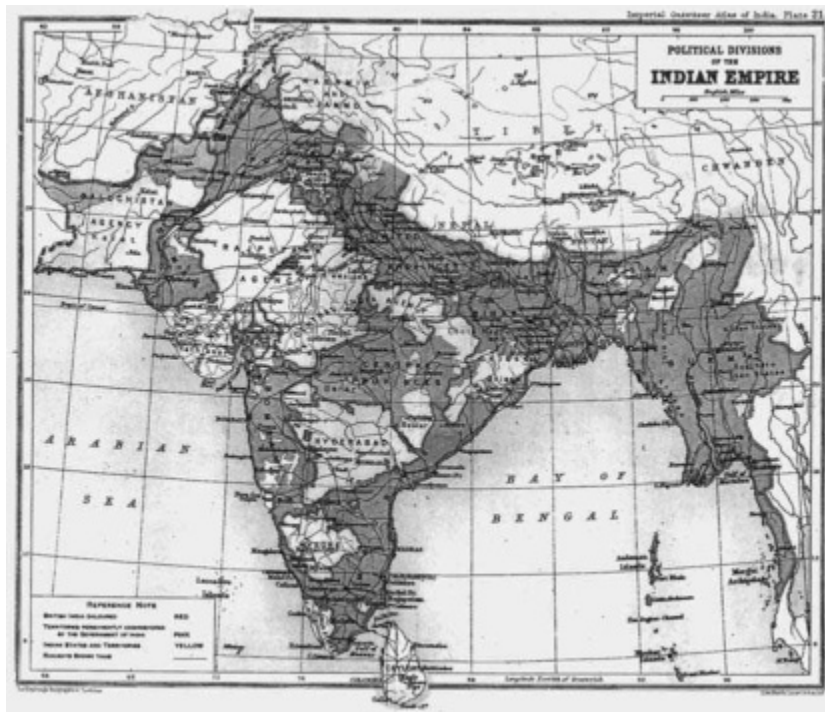


Figure 4.2
The British Indian Empire in the early twentieth century. Territory under direct British administration, including Burma, is the dark grey matrix enveloping the landlocked kingdoms of colonial India's nominally autonomous princes. By the late 1870s the engineers of the PWD had effectively laced together this patchwork with some of the most extensive railway and irrigation systems in the world. (Note: British Ceylon was administered separately under the Colonial Office.)

framework over time, seemingly integral to both the formal and the conceptual structures of the colonial system and its various sub-cultures. "Deprived of roads, railways and canals, the country would even now revert to savagery," boasted the official corps historian of the Royal Engineers in India, in 1935. "After British soldiers had dug the foundations in sweat and blood," he continued, "British engineers raised, as it were, a steel framework for the expansion of the civil administration"² (Figure 4.2).

In the end this built framework of the British Indian Empire – its physical "skeleton" – was among the few tangible artifacts of the colonial project of which both the retiring colonizers and their successors remained unreservedly proud.³ The means had supplanted the supposed object of the colonial enterprise. The metaphorical "scaffolding" had been rendered concrete and permanent. But the meanings that these buildings and structures had come to embody remained ambiguous.

This essay explores this dialogical relationship between the conceptual framework of the British Indian administration and the actual physically constructed framework in which it operated. The apparent shift in the perceived value and permanence of these frameworks over time provides a fulcrum for the inquiry. But the question with which I have begun – scaffolding or skeleton? – is rhetorical rather than interrogative. The aim is not to privilege one of these metaphors over the other and thereby settle a previously unresolved issue of representation. Indeed, it could plausibly be argued that the official works and buildings of colonial India served concurrently as both a heuristic and a structural framework. Rather,

what I wish to scrutinize here is the discursive tension *between* these contending metaphors of “Empire-building” and the institutional middle ground on which this was played out.⁴ The argument therefore addresses the technocratic practices that interceded between the intentional “inputs” and built “outputs” of empire. It is concerned, moreover, with how these practices themselves became a framework of conventions that mediated in between politically and theoretically rational intentions on the one hand and culture-embedded vernacular practices on the other, in the production and reproduction of the spatial structure, conventional forms and conceptual norms of the colonial social environment. At first provisional, these building and planning conventions became integral over time to the basic structure of the colonial system and its various subcultures. I conclude, however, that the instrumental function of this built framework in the spatial ordering of colonial India cannot be adequately understood without a fuller appreciation of its additional cognitive function as a relatively stable frame of reference in which the inherently unstable conceptual frameworks of the colonizers, the colonized, and their various subaltern intermediaries could be negotiated, engaged as they were in a shifting politics of identification and differentiation within the closed system of colonial modernity.

The primary research that underpins this essay was conducted upon the previously all-but-overlooked official government records of the routine building programs and procedures of the Public Works Department through the final century of colonial administration.⁵ This then is an empirically grounded reading of the formal agency of the colonial regime on the building scene. Although the account that emerges is certainly not the whole story of the everyday colonial built environment – as other essays in this collection elucidate – it is an attempt to analyze certain widespread and influential colonial building practices which, by virtue of their codification in the regulations and procedures of the PWD, were the intentional objects of actions and debates methodically documented in the day-to-day proceedings of the Department.

In the historical analysis outlined here I employ what I call a cognitive-historical approach; one that focuses on indicators of practice-specific modes of reasoning as well as shifting patterns of intention over time. Whereas the actual forms and layouts of PWD-built environments changed relatively little from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, I discern that design reasoning within this PWD system changed significantly. Initially flexible and heuristic, it tended to ossify with time. This may be explained at one level, I propose, by a corresponding shift between the distinctly different types of rationality that prevailed in the colonial arena at different stages of the British Indian regime. At the finer grain of actual design decision-making, it is also illuminating to consider the changing nature and objects of competition among the various professional and bureaucratic subcultures that vied for dominance within the institutional framework of the PWD. But the framework of formal and behavioral conventions in which the designers of the colonial built environment were also constrained, as occupants themselves, can perhaps best be understood by analogy to a game.

Although purposively erected as the scaffolding for a grander and more permanent project of spatial and social change, this provisional framework ultimately constituted the spatial bounds and rules of play for the reproduction of a limited, intrinsically artificial reality whose effective function was, above all, the conservation of the dominant state of play of the colonial subculture that had conceived it.

GAME-LIKE REASONING IN COLONIAL PLANNING AND DESIGN THOUGHT

Building designers and settlement planners do not so much create spaces as they delimit and circumscribe them – in terms of both physical and conceptual constraints – from the infinite space of potential design solutions. Game-like, it was within such a “solution space” of limited and thereby definable and accountable possibilities, framed by mutually recognized rules, that a characteristic pattern and style of PWD-designed buildings emerged in Victorian India.

But the rules of a game are not merely a set of prohibitions. Similar to the rules implicit in design conventions, observes the architectural essayist William Hubbard, they tend to describe a complete and consistent way of acting.⁶ “When we set up the rules of a game, we construct such a way of acting. From all the possible ways we could act, we choose certain ones, and we make that choice on the basis of a felt internal consistency: ... a pattern of acting that makes sense to us. When we agree to play a game, we agree among ourselves that we will do only those chosen actions.”⁷ The internal consistency of habitual cultural practices can also be described in such game-like terms, suggests the sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, but with the important distinction that such a “*habitus*,” or “system of dispositions,” consists in what Bourdieu characterizes as “a feel for the game” where the rules are typically inexplicit.⁸

What made sense to the technocratic administrators and military guardians of colonial India who inhabited the buildings and settlements designed by the PWD was the disaggregating spatial logic of that conspicuously constructed environment. The social space and practices of colonial-modern India were characterized by a propensity to delimit an ethnically and politically complex cultural landscape in terms of inviolable cultural categories and social divisions, thereby making it sensible and manageable. The Public Works Department provided some of the more ubiquitous “organizing actions” through which such propensities were embodied in substantive spatial and bureaucratic forms.⁹ As the technical branch of the colonial administration, the PWD was responsible both for structuring the “space” of colonial authority and for organizing the guidelines and methods by which this exclusive built environment was to be developed and reproduced through further design and planning. In terms of the game analogy, then, the PWD had laid out the boundaries and codified the rules of play. Through the individual agency of its executive and technical staff it also played its own game prodigiously.

To illustrate and develop this argument I wish to examine two historically distinct “states of play” discernible in the Empire-building efforts of, and within, the Public Works Department. I begin at the outset of the “game” with the initial

open-ended strategic actions of the PWD engineers to secure and rationalize the physical environment of India for the purposes of colonial development. This is what I will distinguish as a “projective” state of play. It was characterized by what decision-theorists would call a “strategic rationality.” Developing the argument historically, I make a fundamental distinction between such “strategic” modes of reasoning and the “parametric rationality” that prevails when the decision-maker believes (often naively) that the context and criteria of the problem are unchanging or sufficiently predictable – with the underlying assumption that they have superior knowledge of the situation – to be fully within their competence to control.¹⁰ It was such a parametric rationality that underpinned a later “framing” state of play in the game of colonial Empire-building in British India. However, the PWD engineers’ successive and partially overlapping concerns with the institutional consolidation and professional control of this exclusive colonial field of play were inevitably colored by their knowing complicity in this game. One of the more telling manifestations of this was an apparent fetishization over time of the normative planning and construction parameters that constrained their designs. Moreover, the “typical” building designs they produced were often only suboptimal solutions to the comfort and specific functional requirements of their occupants. The tolerance of colonial servants for the constructional and operational deficiencies of these buildings contrasted conspicuously with metropolitan expectations in an age of unprecedented technological advances spearheaded by the British engineering professions and their unbridled drive for innovation and progress. The engineers of colonial India were ultimately prepared to suspend their belief in the sovereign rationale of optimization, in deference to the inherent “satisficing” or making-do mentality of the colonial administration they served.¹¹ For those whose careers were vested in the colonial project, the paradoxical logic of the game was not to win – that is, to exercise the optimal moves and solutions that would bring the game to a swift and decisive end – but to play along indefinitely and thereby maintain their own coveted role in that particular and peculiar game.

It was only relatively late in Britain’s colonial relationship with India – “late in the game,” so to speak – that the political agenda of the colonial regime was manifested overtly in a self-consciously imperial architecture. But the monumental public buildings of historicist grandeur and display that Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, among others, were commissioned to design in the early twentieth century were among the most conspicuous indicators of the important changes in the ethos and pattern of colonial political intention that had come about over the preceding half-century. In its very substance – its hard, permanent materials of ancient stone reinforced by the iron, concrete and steel of British industry – this architecture represented the ultimate ossification of the provisional “scaffolding” with which the colonial polity had been assembled. What remained of the aborted project of colonial social engineering was only the hollow facade of imperial authority and system, propped up by the skeletal cage of its own technical superstructure.

PROJECTING COLONIAL SPACE: A STRATEGIC RATIONALE

Positivism

Strategic rationality is a way of thinking defined by an axiom of symmetry; that is, the agent acts in an environment of other actors, none of whom can be assumed to be less rational or sophisticated than the agent is her/himself.¹² In the case of the new Public Works Department, the colonial engineers were genuinely challenged at first by the testing climate and other unfamiliar environmental conditions they sought to temper in their building efforts in India. A possibly even greater challenge was presented by the recently rebellious if not inscrutable “native” population and its building trades and conventions, on which they still depended for virtually all the labor and allied building skills and material for the execution of their designs.

As early as the 1860s the ambitious works and building program of the Public Works Department had imposed a distinctive and ubiquitous spatial and architectural order throughout the colonial settlement areas of British India. Indeed, the banal norms and forms of this typical PWD-built environment were already too familiar for some (Figure 4.3):

Who does not know the sense of desolation that comes over one at first sight of some of our Indian cantonments, the straight and dusty roads, the rows of glaring white rectangular barracks, the barn-like church, differing only from a barrack in the presence of a square tower and classical (!) portico ... Then the houses, evidently built after the model of the barracks ... High bare white-washed walls, a barn-like roof, with perhaps a dirty ceiling cloth shaking in the wind; a dilapidated plaster floor, and square holes cut in the walls doing duty as doors and windows.¹³

The vocabulary with which this standardized colonial landscape of the 1860s was disparaged in the above passage might well have served the critique of functionalist Modern architecture and planning of a century later. Certainly, such typical “modern” buildings of British India were strikingly chaste and parsimonious in contrast to the exquisitely carved architectures of the Muslim and Hindu empires that the British had superseded. Despite variations in arrangement and proportion, and the wide range of possible functions for which a given building might be designated, they variously depressed or reassured the observer with their monotony; a homogeneous, thoroughly predictable built environment of which each starkly rendered component was seemingly derived from the same generic prototype. From the standard details of *chunum* floors, wooden door frames and clerestory louvres, all the way up to the standard layout of the typical British Indian “station” itself, innovation and individuality were seemingly proscribed under a singular collective ethic of spartan simplicity and discipline. Settlements were hardly distinguishable from one to the next – the same Cartesian grid of civil and military “lines” laid out with only incidental variation on the tabula rasa of the Indian plains (Figure 1.11).

The sense of desolation attributed to this planned and standardized built environment of colonial India seemed to anticipate the anomie of the mass-

Figure 4.3
Typical semi-detached
bungalow-style quarters
for married officers
(ca. 1860), Mhow
Cantonment, Madhya
Pradesh.



Figure 4.4
The Thomason College of
Engineering, Roorkee,
Uttar Pradesh.



produced “Alphavilles” and “Levittowns” that were to arise years later with the suburban expansion of European and American cities after World War II. But such critiques were not the idle grumbling of a marginalized *arrière-garde* resigned to the inevitability of such standards.¹⁴ Indeed, the first and most earnest critics of the status quo were those most directly engaged in its making.

The preceding attack on “Anglo-Indian architecture” appeared in 1864 in the inaugural volume of the *Professional Papers on Indian Engineering*. Major J. G. Medley, the author, and the editor of this self-consciously professional journal, was also the Principal of the Thomason College of Engineering – a primary training ground for “native” assistant engineers and subordinate technical staff for the PWD system, and the first civil engineering college to be established not only in India, but in the whole of the British Empire¹⁵ (Figure 4.4). Medley directed his derisive

comments at his brother officers in the Public Works Department, goading them to do better. His impatience with the status quo was quintessentially “progressive,” his appeal imbued with the positivism and reforming zeal that multitalented and prodigiously industrious professionals such as Medley brought to the PWD and the other “scientific” branches of the colonial technocracy. For these men – the actual designers and builders of the technical infrastructure on which colonial development relied – the engineering of a better social environment was a genuinely earnest and rational undertaking. Becoming modern was no game.

A defining trait of the modern ethos, it has been suggested, is a positivist intentionality with regard to action – the need to know that what one does is “the way it must be.” When it comes to games, merely arbitrary rules are eschewed in favor of goals and actions justifiable in utilitarian terms. The modernist condescends to play a game only in the belief that subscribing rigorously to the rules of play achieves some autonomous rational purpose.¹⁶

It was with just such a positivism that the settlement planning and building practices of the British Indian administration were brought under the rationalizing yoke of the new Public Works Department following its establishment in 1855. New norms of professional excellence and expertise were taking hold that were challenging the ad hoc-ism that had sufficed in earlier years of informal colonization. Within the discrete parameters of the Department’s undertakings, these engineers were energetically applying themselves to the task of rationalizing the environments and operations with which they were charged; identifying and defining design problems and devising better solutions to these (Figure 4.5).

But if, as I have proposed, the engineers of the PWD sincerely believed that their work engaged them responsibly in India’s socially transforming process of “becoming modern,” they could not avoid participating simultaneously in a contradictory charade. As members of the colonizing elite they were also necessarily complicit in a socially discriminating game of “being modern” in exclusive contrast to the subject society. The earnest and, as some might argue, naive positivism of their technical investment in the colonial arena served as much to *represent* modernity and its “others” as it did to engineer actual social change.

This distinction between the transforming and often traumatic process of actually “becoming modern,” and the comparatively nominal conceit of merely “being modern” – that is, affecting modernity – is a key to understanding the paradoxical colonial-modern norms and forms of practice with which I am concerned here. I wish to return presently to the latter problematic issue of complicity, but to pursue that point we need first to consider more fully the extent and instrumental nature of the role played by the PWD in the modernization of colonial India.

The role of the PWD in colonial development

The creation of the Public Works Department [PWD] in the Government of India in 1855 was a significant indicator of broader conceptual changes in colonial policy that were to come about in the years that followed. The East India Company’s original trading monopoly, for and through which the British Indian Empire had been

assembled, had long been revoked. In its stead, however, the Company had come to be the effective administrator of a geographically, politically, and ethnically complex patchwork of territory enveloping most of the Indian subcontinent. This was a vast market of hundreds of millions of potential consumers, it was argued, managed exclusively for the exports of British manufacturers. But even by the middle of the nineteenth century this administrative undertaking remained diffuse and irregular as a result of the incremental and opportunistic manner in which it had been cobbled together over the years. Different, often opposing policies and practices had taken root in different regions where relative isolation and the exigencies of local conditions and practices had impeded central authority. It had not, to that point, been inspired by a collectively compelling ideal of government on an

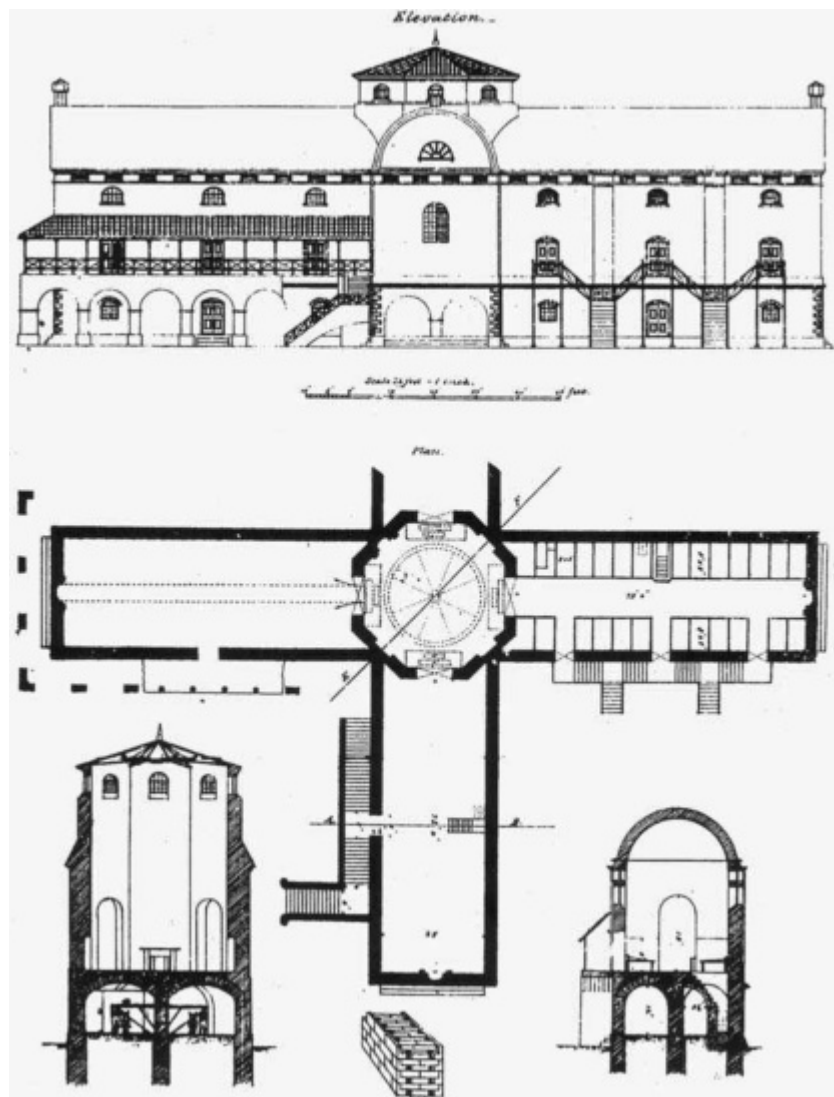


Figure 4.5
Major J. G. Medley's
proposal (ca. 1865) for a
climatologically improved
design for military
barracks in upper India.
Note the porous,
insulating construction of
the thick masonry walls
and vaults, the radial
plan and ox-driven
"thermantidote" in the
cool, crypt-like ground
story for mechanically
assisting the evacuation
of warm air through the
central tower.

imperial scale; nor had the responsibilities entailed been fully accepted. The commitment to construct irrigation canals, railways, and other works of “public improvement” with which the new Public Works Department was mandated was an important first step along the path of a more stridently rational and authoritative approach to the colonial governance of India by central authority.

While impeding progress temporarily, the outbreak of the Indian Rebellion of 1857–8, just two years after the establishment of the PWD, gave further momentum to this initiative.¹⁷ Expedient though its immediate motivations were, with the anxiety to secure its grip on India in the aftermath of that bloody popular uprising, the new imperial Raj was to pursue a vigorous policy of technical development over the subsequent two decades with the hope of sustaining peace through public works (Figure 4.6).

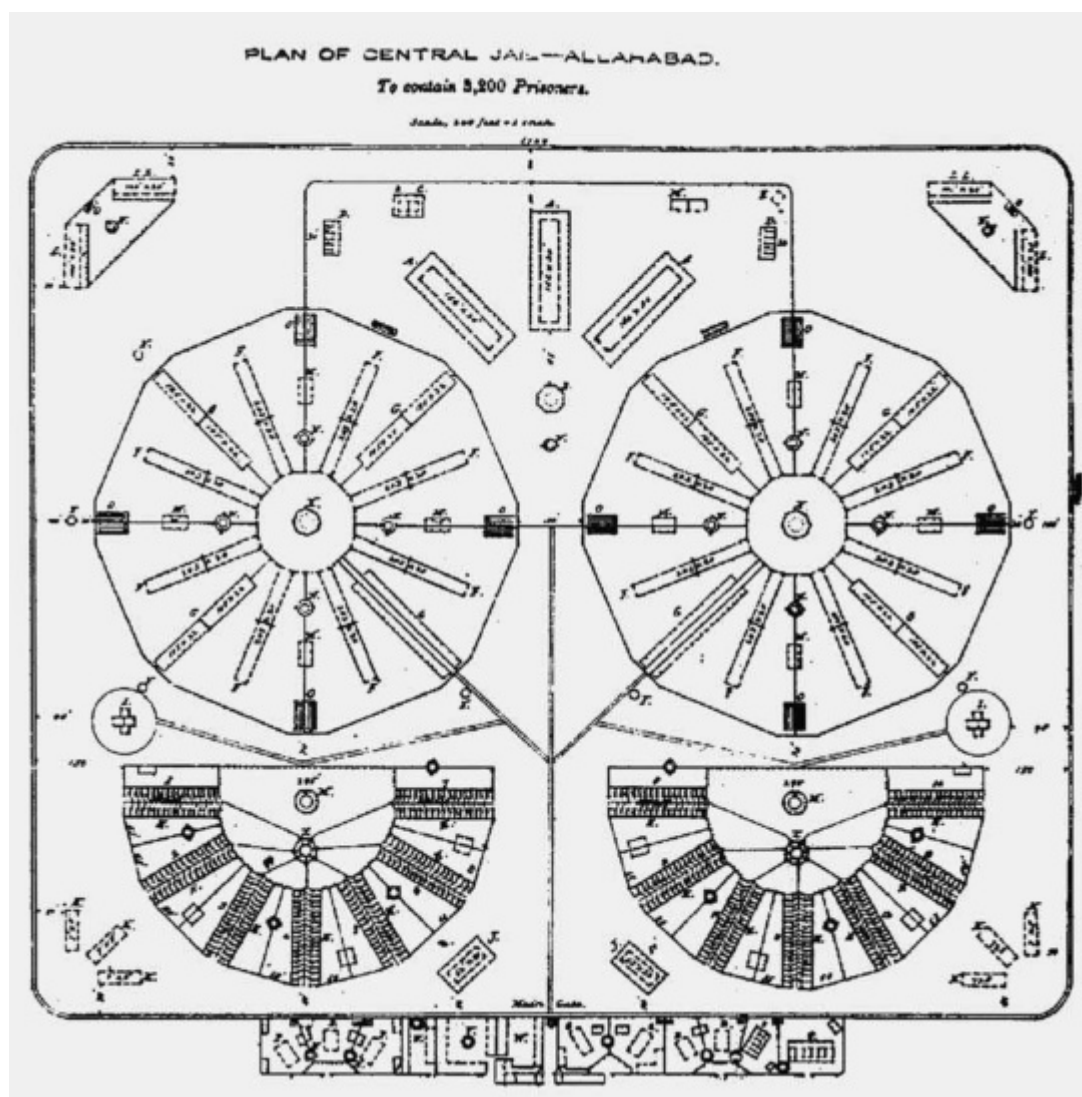
The volume and range of the Public Works Department’s building efforts in the second half of the nineteenth century were impressive. In its various technically specialized branches it undertook the development of an extensive network of roads, railways and irrigation canals which substantially transfigured the economic and cultural geography of the subcontinent. Those audacious technical feats tended to overshadow the output of the Departmental engineers as builders, but they were no less prodigious in that vein. The PWD designed and constructed facilities and accommodation for virtually every facet of the colonial administration. This included government offices, all military works and buildings, public service buildings such as post and telegraph offices and the stations and related buildings of the state railway system, and all civil buildings and institutions concerned with law and order, such as courthouses, police stations and jails (Figure 4.7). Finally, and perhaps most significantly, it built a wide array of residential “quarters” and “bungalows” to house the ever-growing ranks of meticulously graded and categorized government servants – European and Indian.



Figure 4.6
Peace and public works.
Road and railway bridges
at Lucknow, the scene of
the decisive battle that
suppressed the pivotal
Rebellion of 1857–8.

Figure 4.7
Plan for a new central jail
at Allahabad to contain
3200 prisoners, PWD
(Civil Works and Buildings
Branch), 1861. Similar
large-scale prisons
employing such radial,
panoptic planning
principles were
constructed in the 1860s
at other key civil stations
including Lahore and
Benares.

Qualitatively, these unaffected, utilitarian structures seemed to speak of a collective ideal of temporary sacrifice for the sake of some greater future objective. At this basic level of everyday accommodation, at least, the colonial administration never really transcended the calculated attitude to the colonization of India with which the original commercial venture had begun when the British East India Company was chartered in the early seventeenth century. The colonial venture was an investment, a long-term investment to be sure, but the objective had always been to realize a profit – at first purely commercial, later compounded with moral and political capital – and, eventually, to withdraw. The mundane buildings that the PWD was required to construct were provisional means towards that end; mere “consumables” from an economic standpoint. Indeed, during most of Britain’s two



centuries of colonial dominance in India, questions of “architecture” rarely arose. It was a building scene dominated by engineers, in which opportunities for professional architects, even outside the official building needs of the colonial administration, were few and far between.

A partial explanation for this state of professional inequity seemed to lie in the anomalous nature of this “colony.” As one of the relatively rare qualified architects to venture out to Victorian India reported to his colleagues back home:

No Englishman is a settler in India. We do not transport ourselves, our houses, and our modes of life to that country. We only go there for a term of years, and consequently, looking upon the whole thing as temporary, we put up with that which in a real colony would soon be superseded.¹⁸

In the eyes of this disdainful professional observer, the buildings that did get erected were “... motley, *modern* [with] no pretension to architectural character.”¹⁹

But as transients themselves, the tiny community of British colonial servants in India had proceeded to occupy this banal but versatile built environment with stoical indifference for the most part, and even self-mocking humor. “What is it?” queried the author of a satirical traveler’s introduction to a typical British-Indian colonial settlement in the 1850s,

... that square white-washed edifice, with an excrescence at one end, looking for all the world like an extinguisher on a three-dozen chest! ... You may well ask. It is the church! a regular protestant building! protesting against everything architectural, aesthetic, ornamental, or useful; designed and built according to a Government prescription.²⁰

Matters of architectural substance and style were indeed of minor significance, at least initially, by comparison to the sheer spatial and technological impact of colonial urban and infrastructure development. Through such strategic incursions of technological progress, an instrumental rationalism, with direct links to the Utilitarian philosophical movement back in England, was weaving its way into the social fabric of the new Raj.²¹ Paradoxically, the feudal polity of “traditional” India that the paternalistically minded politicians and imperial strategists who presided in London and Calcutta were seeking to conserve was simultaneously being transformed into the “techno-scientific landscape” of colonial-modern institutions and infrastructure on which both the colonial authorities and the colonized population were increasingly dependent.²² This new landscape was composed of millions of hectares of newly arable farmland that had been pioneered through vast irrigation schemes with their Arcadian constellation of new canal colonies; massive investments in metropolitan infrastructure, including municipal water supplies, streets and sewers; major institutional complexes such as prisons, hospitals and institutions of higher education and research; and perhaps above all the extensive railway system developed in the second half of the nineteenth century by both private and state railway companies under the superintendence of the PWD Railway Branch.

But even while the ongoing engineering works of the Department were dramatically reconfiguring the space and thus the social order of the colonial

landscape, the Department's planning and building output could be seen to be working increasingly at cross-purposes to such change, impressing a more and more rigid pattern of spatial classification, containment, and control upon that same landscape.²³ It is one of the contradictions of colonialism that the colonizers themselves were among the most resistant to the cultural implications of the technocratic changes they were imposing, especially within their own colonial subculture. One had to play strictly by the rules of the game if the noble illusion of altruistic development under colonial administration was to be sustained.

FRAMING COLONIAL SPACE AND PRACTICE: A PARAMETRIC RATIONALE

Limits

For the transient, largely expatriate colonial officials who occupied these PWD-built facilities, it was ultimately the normality and predictability of these utilitarian structures that was most valued rather than any rationally superior amenities or comforts they may have furnished. These tried and true patterns, and the habitual "way of being" in colonial service that these accommodated, evidently served to allay some of the anxiety that arose from the cultural alienation of this colonial elite. In the literature and memoirs of British Indian service we are frequently confronted with a tension – almost obsessive in the later, critical novels of authors such as George Orwell and E. M. Forster – between the increasing self-consciousness and unease of an anomic colonial subculture and its necessary complicity in reinforcing its own cagelike forms and institutions. Consider the anxious duality implicit in the following reminiscences of Indian service early in the twentieth century:

... I had sometimes a sense of isolation, of being a *caged* white monkey in a Zoo whose patrons were this incredibly numerous beige race.

Riding through the densely packed bazaars ... passing village temples, cantering across the magical plains that stretched away to the Himalayas, I shivered at the millions and immensities and secrecies of India. I liked to finish my day at the club, in a world whose limits were known and where people answered my beck. An incandescent lamp coughed its light over shrivelled grass and dusty shrubbery; in its circle of illumination exiled heads were bent over English newspapers, their thoughts far away but close to mine.²⁴

As Ranajit Guha has proposed in his analysis of this passage, the British were never really "at home" in their Indian Empire. In their little self-constructed "world whose limits were known," however, the humble comforts of standard PWD-designed bungalows and club buildings (Figure 4.8) furnished a physical and conceptual framework in which the expatriate colonial servants could retreat and partially suspend their "pervasive anxiety about being lost in Empire."²⁵

By the early twentieth century this obsession with self-imposed "limits" was clearly symptomatic of the endgame of a colonial subculture in which maintaining appearances ultimately had a more certain efficacy than actions. The actual design thinking and practices that shaped these narrowly prescribed spaces had also changed significantly since the middle of the nineteenth century. The motley but



Figure 4.8
The 'Club' at Ajmer,
Rajasthan. This was the
social center of the
former European civil
station.

modernistic norms and forms of these buildings had ceased to be justified in terms of an optimizing strategic rationale of striving for greater environmental comfort and control, but rather as the parameters or "props," as it were, for a more important charade of "being modern."

Consolidation

Despite their evident shortcomings, notwithstanding the positivist propensities of the Departmental engineers, it is surprising how few improvements to the conventional patterns of "Anglo-Indian architecture" were actually introduced over the final century of British rule, or even called for by the colonial community at large. But once the infrastructure of the newly formalized Raj had been sufficiently expanded and technically upgraded to the standards of the day, in the decade following the Rebellion of 1857, the rationalizing compulsions of the PWD engineers had been directed away from the buildings as such to focus on the methodological framework through which these were produced Departmentally. By the 1870s the PWD had effectively institutionalized the received vernacular of British Indian building norms into a formal system of "standard plans" and "type designs."²⁶

The efficacy of this system was played out on at least two levels. First there was the basic utility and cost-effectiveness of the buildings themselves; second, the cognitive economy and heuristics enabled by the institutionalized practices and design procedures of the PWD.

This design system was hardly radical. But the intensity and expediency with which the PWD's corpus of standard designs and details had been worked up had effected an accelerated but methodical evolutionary process of "selection" from the broad range of historical experience of European building in India. Embodied

Figure 4.9
Bungalow (ca. 1870s),
Agra Cantonment, Uttar
Pradesh. This subtly
classicized and
climatologically refined
variation on the standard
type reflects some of the
design improvements
developed in the early
years of the PWD, and
subsequently
institutionalized. Very
similar designs and
details were still being
built over half a century
later.



in these new designs was thus a wealth of empirically tested precedent knowledge about appropriate spatial planning and effective constructional detailing for buildings in the various regions and climatic extremes of the subcontinent. The Anglo-Indian “bungalow” – that most fundamental and representative vernacular building type of the European in India – provided many of the most obvious cues to effective design for engineers concerned with basic design problem-solving rather than the construing of creative design opportunities (Figure 4.9). Designs adapted from that well-established pattern could also benefit from the efficacy of conventional construction details, materials, quantities, etc. Such a precedent-based, parametric approach to design and specification enabled the ready adaptation of at-hand technology and experience to all manner of new building types.

In the heyday of the post-Rebellion development boom, the strength of the Department had resided in the basic productivity and relative efficiency of its methodology, given the perennial shortage of qualified professionals on the ground in India. But, not surprisingly, the quantitatively daunting building assignment of the PWD had been approached, in the first instance, as a problem in military logistics, of supply and services. Aesthetic considerations were rarely a priority, and many of the routine civil buildings produced by the Department were indeed similar to the barracks and associated buildings the military engineers built for their own segregated military settlements, or “cantonments” as they were known in British India. With the pragmatism and uniformity of their “typical” designs and construction details, and the distinctive patterns of site usage and planning by which these buildings were ordered into expansive settlements, they affected a conspicuously disciplined if not martial character that clearly distinguished the exclusive space of the colonial elite.

In the routine operations of the Department, building designs rarely bore any

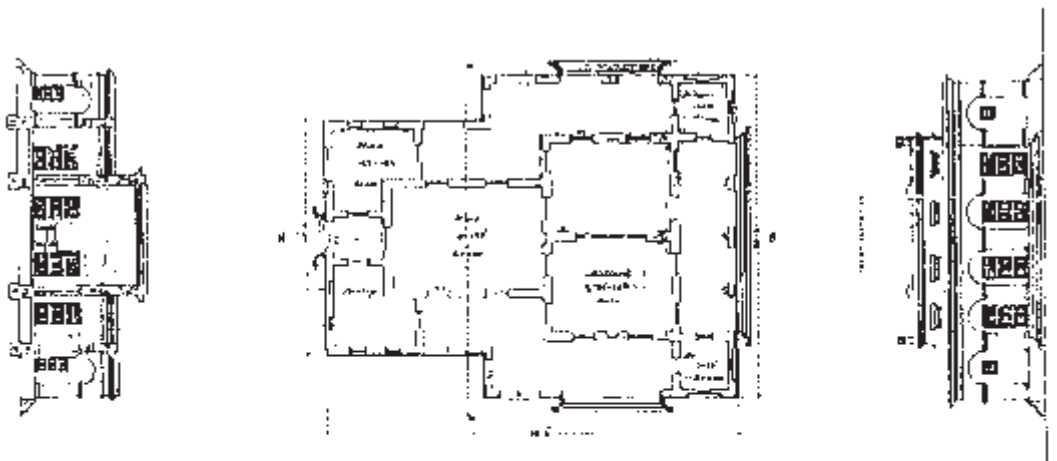
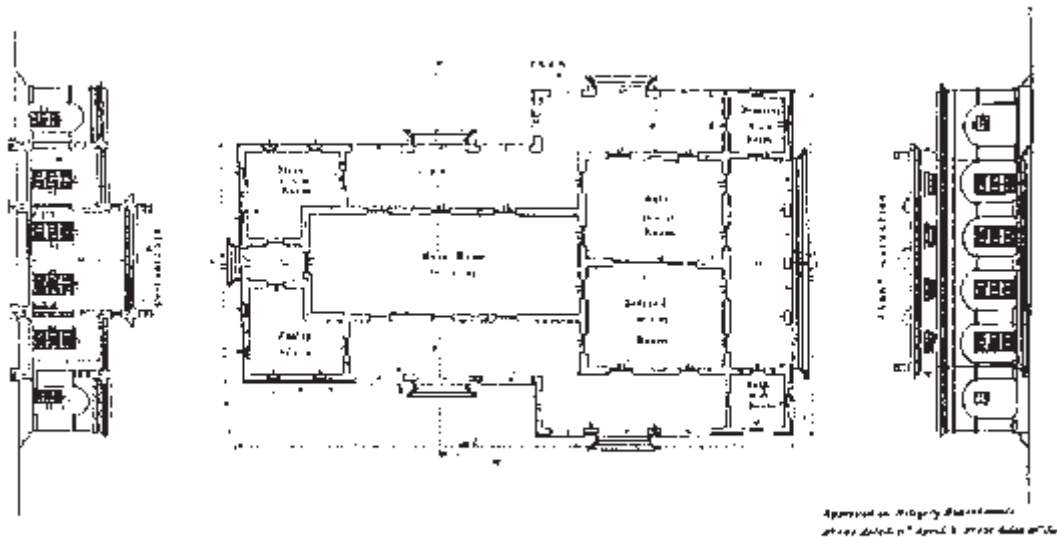
obvious stamp of individual authorship or direct prescriptions from higher political authority. Rather, design was a collective, multi-agent-based process that effectively conformed to a normative consensus about the appropriate form and order of the colonial built environment that had emerged over the previous two centuries of European building experience in India. This vernacular – the too-familiar typology of freestanding bungalows with low verandas and lofty dark interiors that Major Medley had despaired of – had itself been substantially derived and adapted from indigenous building practices of the coastal localities that the early European traders had first encountered.²⁷ It furnished a standard of competence and a set of normative rules and design ideas that the PWD builders “could think *with* rather than of,”²⁸ at least in the early, most productive years of the Department. The typical PWD-executed buildings thereby reproduced a known and socially accepted pattern with which the everyday building needs of the colonial administration were met with reasonable efficiency and, most important of all, with a parsimonious cognitive economy.

In the remote arena of colonial India where metropolitan expertise in the design professions was always in short supply, the Public Works Department exercised an alternative managerial prerogative to plan and account strictly for all of the material and human resources invested in works and buildings. One of the more consequential implications of this was the effective codification of the tried and tested everyday building knowledge of colonial India in the form of the official design norms and procedures of the Department. This partially standardized system of plans, specifications and procedures furnished what might be described as an institutionally formalized vernacular. But contrary to what contemporary critics and later commentators have generally assumed, the many official “standard plans” developed in this manner by the PWD were generally not intended as strict prescriptions for how a building was actually to be constructed.²⁹ A standard disclaimer was typically printed on such plans, clearly explaining that they were intended only as guidelines for planning, from which detailed and appropriately adapted designs were to be prepared in every instance.³⁰ Such parametric “frames” were thus a heuristic rather than a prescriptive device. They directed and greatly accelerated design decision-making, but were amenable to limitless variation and refinement, compounding and dimensional manipulation, regional adaptation and local optimization (Figures 4.10–4.11).

The mature PWD design system furnished precedent-based design templates as a form of “default reasoning” – a significant mode of cognitive economy when it came to the occasional need for rapid, massive design output. This default approach enabled not only relative speed and efficient focus on necessary, incremental design modifications, but the effective division and distribution of design labor as well. In one instance, for example, a single executive engineer with a handful of subordinate staff was thereby enabled to produce hundreds of subtly but appropriately differentiated designs comprising the official corpus of standard plans for all military buildings in India, in just a few short years.³¹ On the same principle, hundreds of different design decision-makers, widely distributed at

Figure 4.10 (opposite)
Standard plans for
officers' mess houses. The
parametrically enlarged
and elongated version of
the plan was designated
for officers of British
infantry or cavalry
regiments; the smaller
version for a regiment of
native cavalry and
infantry.

PLAN 41 - HIGHER HOUSEHOLD
DELIVERED TO RESIDENTS BY PARISH MAGISTRATE ON 10th APRIL 1840
Approved by the Parishes of the Corporation of the City of Liverpool 1840



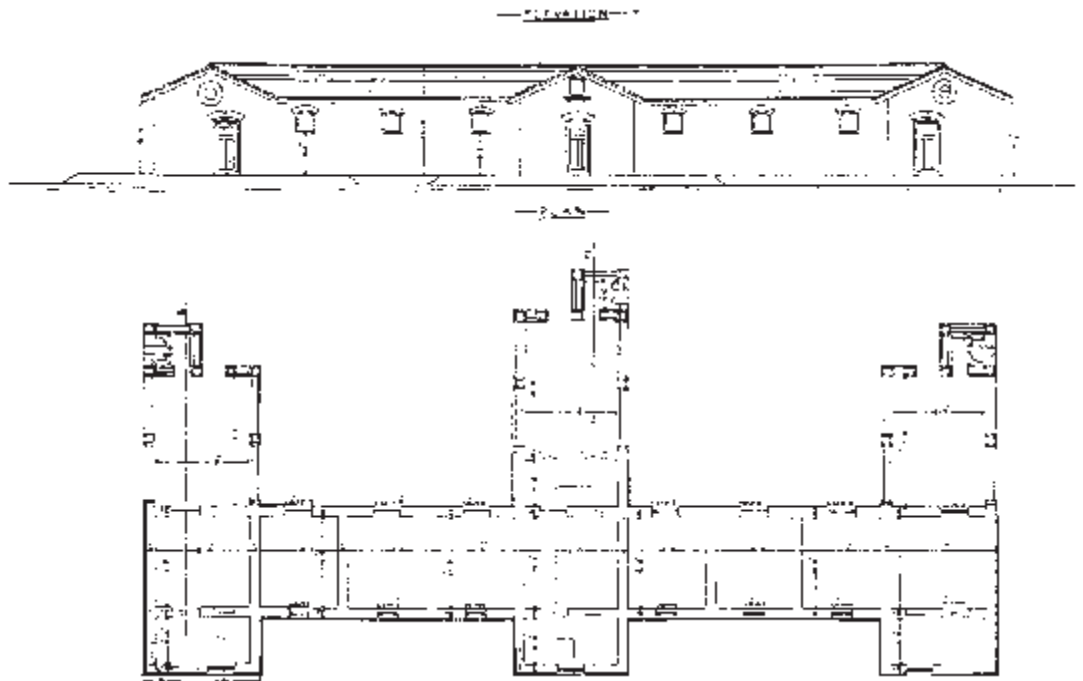
Institutional Frameworks ■

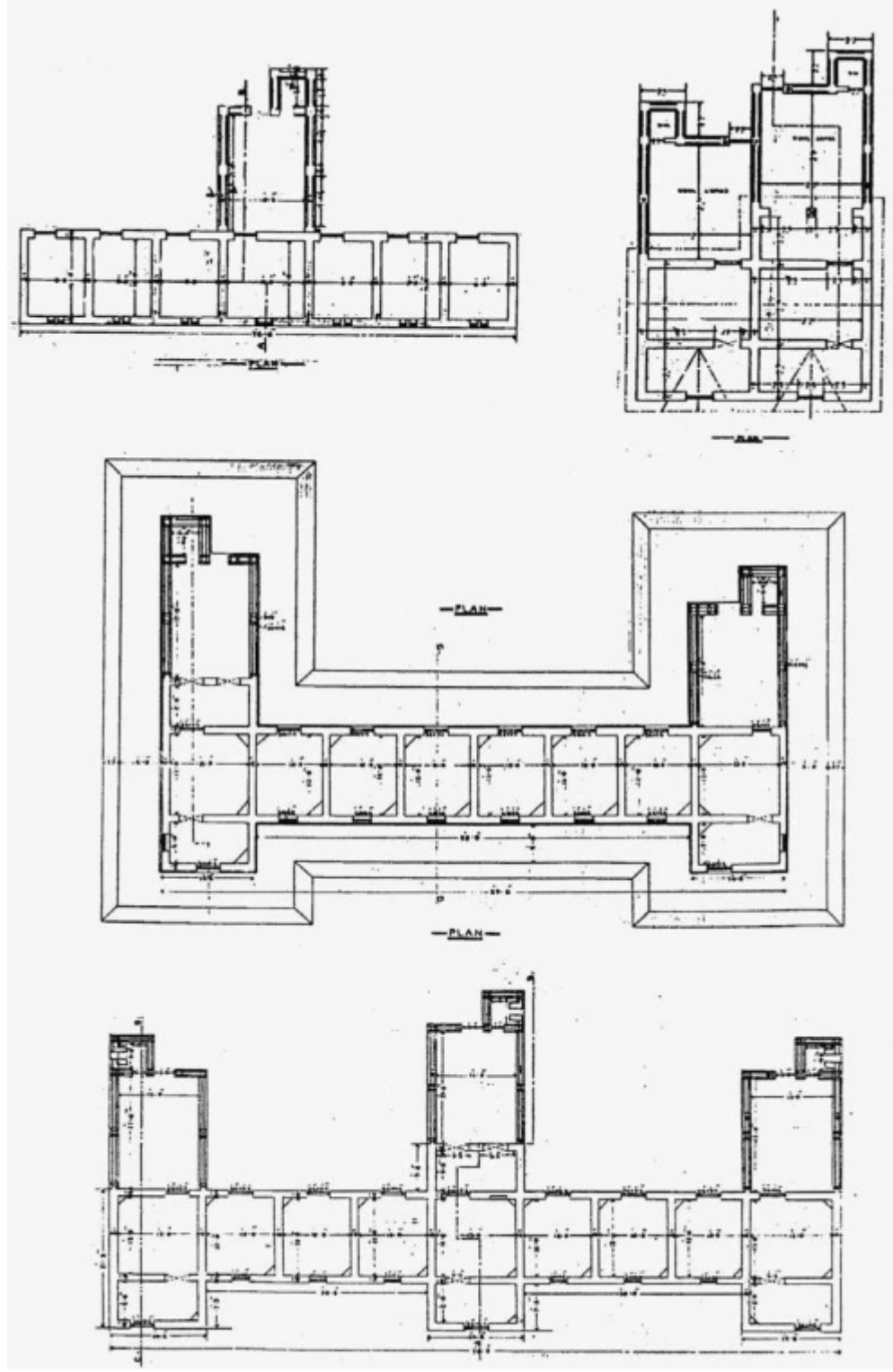
considerable geographic distances from superior authority at Department headquarters, could nevertheless make effective innovations and rationalizations according to circumstance while maintaining formal and budgetary consistency with Departmental norms without the need for regular site inspection by senior officers. This, of course, could greatly accelerate the execution of work, whereas the communication of design queries and revisions between the central PWD secretariat and district officers could take weeks to months before the completion of the railway and road system late in the nineteenth century. But even as late as 1917, the particular felicity of the system of standard plans as an effective *in-between* mode of both disseminating and regulating design knowledge was staunchly defended against a proposal for further centralization and specialization of design expertise at the expense of the professional autonomy and status of the executive engineers on site.³² As such – and quite apart from the actual efficacy of the designs produced – it is apparent that the institutionalized division of labor within the PWD system had its own political economy as well. This was particularly apparent with regard to the increasing degree of professional rivalry between the original and inordinately dominant professional cadre of the Department – the military engineers – and the rising ranks of civil engineers and, later, architects who did much of the actual design work of the Department.

Competition and Control

Through the long afternoon of the imperial heyday, the principal challenge for the professional establishment of the PWD was no longer the environmental control of

Figure 4.11
(below and opposite)
Standard plans for traffic staff quarters, and design permutations, Tapti Valley Railway, Bombay PWD (Railway Branch), ca. 1899. In each of these variations, the largest units are designated for "Station Masters," mid-size units for "Assistant Station Masters," and one-room cells for "Menial Staff." Note that the doorways to the latter always open to the rear.





a hostile climate and the colonized “Other,” but the internal managerial control of other competing contenders for professional dominance and security within the colonial system itself. Indeed, some of the earliest cracks in the outwardly monolithic Empire stemmed from such internal stresses. Within the Public Works Department, members of some of the most self-consciously progressive professions of “modern” industrial Britain were compelled to subordinate their pride and autonomy to serve collectively as the “salary-men” of an inherently conservative if not reactionary colonial technocracy.

The actual space of colonial occupation in which professional engineers and architects were called upon to build in India was highly controlled; perhaps even more so conceptually than physically. But there were important incentives for submitting to such constraints. It was a closed arena, tidy and eminently manageable. Like the reassuringly imaginary, rule-bound “space” of a game, the technocratically designed and regulated little world in which the colonial servants of British India functioned was also comfortably removed from the aggressively competitive arena of modern metropolitan Europe. With the asymmetric political and economic authority of colonial rule, the professional establishment of the PWD had been empowered to determine the rules of play without challenge from contending schools of thought and the aggressively competitive economics of free-market enterprise that were driving innovation back “Home.” By subordinating their professional autonomy to the corporate system of colonial Departmental service, and eschewing the destabilizing urge to innovate in their methods and their designs, therefore, they were effectively protecting their own vested interest in sustaining a system that defined and secured a field of opportunity for their exclusive professional engagement.

The tension between the ideal of professional autonomy and the compromising corporatism of colonial service was compounded by the disciplinary heterogeneity of the Public Works Department. The professional “establishment”³³ of the PWD represented at least three distinctly different engineering disciplines: military, civil and mechanical. This last was associated predominantly with the Railway Branch of the Department, which had become a specialized discipline unto itself. Finally the tiny cohort of consulting architects to government, who eventually came to play a limited role within the PWD in the early twentieth century, introduced yet another self-consciously autonomous discipline. Each of these groups held different professional values and, most significantly with regard to the resulting design output, different modes of reasoning as design decision-makers. These differences placed them at occasionally bitter odds with each other in an institutional framework that was consistent with colonial administrative structures in general, in that it clearly discriminated between these groups. In particular, the elite minority of Royal (military) Engineers was favored with a disproportionate measure of authority in the Department as a whole.

The dominance of military engineers in the hierarchy and organizational methodology of the PWD was a legacy of the Department’s origins. Although substantially augmented and restructured with its official establishment in 1855,

the Public Works Department was an institutional palimpsest of the old Indian Engineers Corps and former Military Boards of the East India Company Army. These latent corporate structures and values ensured that the balance of power and many of the most senior posts in the executive echelons of the Department would continue to be retained by engineer-officers deputed to the PWD from the Corps of Royal Engineers during the long era of relative peace that characterized the mature Victorian Empire. The military maintained a similar grip on the upper subordinate ranks of the Department through non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the Sappers and Miners Regiments of the British and Indian Armies. Into the early years of the post-Rebellion era, military engineers still held the numerical balance of power in the PWD as well. But the quantum acceleration of construction of new works and buildings in this period, both public and military, had stretched the military engineering establishment to the limit, calling for the active recruitment of a major new cohort of civil engineers. By 1863, the number of civil engineers had already matched the complement of military engineers. By 1870, the peak of the boom, they were substantially in the majority, with 533 civilians out of the total of 896 engineers on the PWD payroll.³⁴

For the original military establishment of the PWD, the rise of their civilian colleagues to such numerical strength posed potential political and conceptual challenges. The military engineers had, for the most part single-handedly, employed their own ingenuity and methods to accomplish the Department's initial mandate to tame and temper a hostile environment. But whilst there was certainly room for further improvements – particularly the introduction of new industrially produced materials and mechanical technologies onto the Indian building scene – the expertise in that regard resided squarely with the parvenu civil and mechanical engineers. Such knowledge therefore posed a direct threat to the cognitive authority of the military officers in the Department. By shifting away, at that point, from the projective preoccupation with design problem-solving to focus the Department's priorities on the framing of design standards and a consolidated operational framework, that threat was at least temporarily allayed, whilst incorporating further needed technical expertise into the Departmental system.

With time, however, the internal political logic and alleged counterproductivity of this bureaucratic turn became an issue of open and increasingly bitter contention. As the ramification of protocols and standards pushed questions of design ever further to the margins, the inherently more hierarchical and corporate-minded military engineers were perceived to be pulling rank and fetishizing red tape to keep their rival civilian colleagues permanently subordinated in the procedural machinations of the Departmental bureaucracy.³⁵

These bureaucratic propensities of public works administration in British India were recognized and deplored by others as well. For William T. Thornton, Secretary for Public Works in the India Office in the early 1870s, the Department was "very far from perfect" in its bureaucratic constitution, and worsening steadily by virtue of its counterproductive tendency to multiply functions and increase complexity in every effort to improve operations. In his criticisms, Thornton found

himself attuned and sympathetic to the lobby of the civilian professionals in the Department. In a rather surprising polemic that he published commercially while he was still holding his post at the India Office, he pinpointed the fundamental problem with the Department in its inherent lack of trust in its own functionaries:

Governments in general, and the Indian Government in particular, behave as if they believed all their servants to be knaves, only to be kept from picking and stealing by being sharply and suspiciously watched. In constituting the Indian Public Works Department, the aim seems to have been less to stimulate than to control activity.³⁶

The Departmental system operated according to an ulterior logic that had little to do with productivity, as far as Thornton could see. Efficiency and progress were checked at every level of the bureaucratic hierarchy as if it were imagined "... that the forces of control would be augmented by being arrested at a series of barriers, and filtered through a series of sieves".³⁷

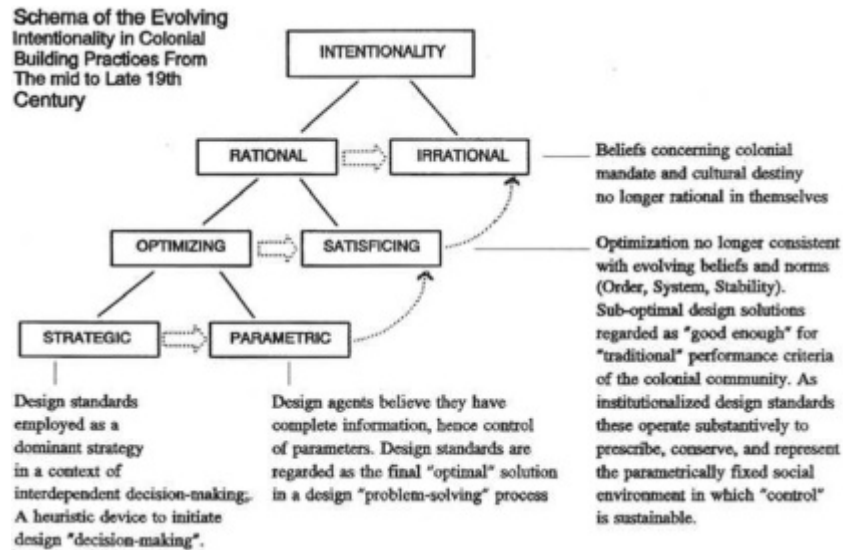
[s]wathed round so tightly with coils of red tape, the veriest engineering Samson would become helpless. To what end have his services been engaged, if he is to be denied the free use of his faculties? – denied the confidence which, when worthily bestowed, tends above all things to elicit zeal and public spirit, and treated instead with a show of jealousy and suspicion than which nothing is so apt to engender precisely those frailties against which it is designed to guard?³⁸

The critical juxtaposition of the courageous individual agent of imperial progress versus the obstructive machinations of the colonial bureaucracy was a common refrain of both critics and champions of Empire – repeated with increasing conviction in the final years of British rule as the unwieldy administrative machine was perceived to be slowly but surely paralyzing the capacity of the regime to respond decisively to the internal political and social challenges with which it was faced. For the imperial apologist, Maude Diver, the engineers were the unsung heroes of the British Indian Empire, particularly those who had bucked the system. But "Departmentalism" had unfortunately stymied the potential of most. Personal at its best, she felt, the PWD had "... too soon become an over-centralized bureaucracy with all the faults of that deplorable system – wittily defined by one of its victims as 'Government by files and despatch boxes, tempered by occasional loss of keys.'"³⁹

THE FRAME AS FOIL

The internal, interdisciplinary tensions that came to the fore within the Public Works Department in the late nineteenth century were indicators of change in a more general pattern of intention that can only be gauged effectively from a longer historical perspective and a broader societal point of view. This was the subtle but significant cognitive shift within the colonial subculture, from the mentality of conquest that characterized the nascent British Raj of the mid-nineteenth century to the very different mind-set of the colonial administration of the early twentieth century, increasingly preoccupied as it was with the notion of a

Figure 4.12
Shifts and slippages in the modes of design reasoning within the PWD system, from the strategic rationality of mid-nineteenth century problem-solving, to the “make-do” and “make-believe” irrationalities of imperial architectural representations in the early twentieth century.



permanent mandate in India and hence its own stability and reproduction. The standardization of the newly rationalized range of solutions for the common building requirements of the British Indian community was among the more telling indicators of an associated shift from “strategic” to “parametric” modes of reasoning in the development of colonial India in that period (Figure 4.12).

In the outwardly self-assured general belief system of the late Victorians in India, far from the madding competition of metropolitan Europe, the call of “efficiency” had been superseded in time by “authority” and “system” as the highest-standing norms governing reasoning and action. The standards that the PWD engineers had devised to consolidate their design knowledge and enable rapid and reliable progress on the technical front had come to play an essentially conservative role. Holding constant the rules by which the colonial social environment was to grow and be renewed, these standards inadvertently helped define a cultural space in which it was believed a permanent British Raj might be sustained.⁴⁰

It was a merely “satisficing” concern with utility, rather than a genuinely optimizing operational efficiency, that characterized PWD practices in later years. This was indicative of a state of colonial social control in which matters of form and the performance of buildings as representations of identity and authority had ultimately assumed priority. In the inherently unstable polity of the aging colonial regime, the engineers and architects of the PWD were increasingly complicit, along with the rest of the colonial subculture, in merely sustaining the politically and psychologically expedient pretence of “being modern” by contrast to the “traditional” society of the indigenous population.⁴¹

In behavior as in building, strict adherence to ever more rigidly prescribed rules of form helped ensure that actions would result in predictable and hence controllable consequences. To invoke the gaming analogy once again, the rules provided a kind of limited reality – “a realm sufficiently believable that, by an act of



Figure 4.13
The North and South
Secretariat Blocks
emerging from their
scaffolding on the
construction site of
Imperial New Delhi,
ca. late 1920s.

complicity," one could suppress their knowledge that this was just a "set-up."⁴² In the twilight of the British Indian administration, the soon-to-depart European officials held no real delusions about the exclusive realm of prosaic order and system in which they had enframed themselves by design. It was a simulacrum of the modernity that would have undermined their privilege and authority if development had continued to be pursued on a broad social scale.

In the end, the cognitive scaffolding of Empire – the belief (though perhaps it was never more than a pretense) in the provisional constructive nature of the colonial technocracy – had finally been stripped away. But the phantasm of a permanent Raj was revealed stillborn, the hulking silhouette of Lutyens's and Baker's Acropolis already staged for inclusion in the pantheon of picturesque skeletal remains of India's past imperial glories (Figure 4.13).

Chapter 5: "Strangers within the Gate"

Public Works and Industrial Art Reform

Arindam Dutta

OUT OF THE SALTMINE

In October of 1900, the *Journal of Indian Art* carried an article on "The Salt Industry of Rajputana."¹ As its title indicates, the *Journal's* purpose was to focus on visual, not gastronomic, taste. Why then an article on salt production in a publication devoted to aesthetics (Figure 5.1)?



Figure 5.1
Salt production at Sambar
salt lake in colonial
Rajputana.
Top: Collection of
spontaneous salt from
the bed of the lake.
Center: Another view
of the collection of
spontaneous salt.
Bottom: Preparing salt
for estimation.

The *Journal* had originally been launched as an accompaniment to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886. Its patrons were the Department of Revenue and Agriculture in India and, in Britain, the India Society and the Department of Science and Art (DSA). This last institution was critical, for it provided the principal ethnographic and tabulation system on which the information made available in the *Journal* was notated: region, skill, material usage. By the year 1900, every one of India's art schools, and by extension the vocational schools, was operating under the shadow of this distant institution. The heads of the four principal art schools in Bombay, Lahore, Calcutta and Madras – John Griffiths, John Lockwood Kipling, Henry Hoover Locke and Ernest Binfield Havell – were all alumni of the DSA's normal school at South Kensington, now known as the Royal College of Art. Much of the pedagogical model of art and artisanal training in India, the drawing textbooks, the casting formats, the pattern models, drew from the DSA's monopoly on art education in the British Empire.

The DSA was founded by the cultural commissars who had organized the Great Exhibition of 1851. To perceive the DSA as a simple case study in design pedagogy, however, would belie the force of the tremendous administrative engine assembled by its creators, the circle of aesthetes gathered around the bureaucrat Henry Cole. Cole and his compatriots belonged to the reform-minded, "Utilitarian" circle around Jeremy Bentham and the India Office bureaucrats James and John Stuart Mill. The abiding preoccupation of this caucus was to devise "means" by which public institutions could be restructured to benefit the average citizen and worker. Particularly critical in this respect were the theories of political economy forwarded by the younger Mill as a response to the perceived depredations of industrial capitalism. This liberal coterie of aesthetes and pedagogues were therefore significant not only as artists but as significantly influential experimentalists in what Marxists later termed the "modes of production debates" – the correlation of social formation to productive paradigms – of the nineteenth century. The principal faculty of the DSA included, at different times, stalwarts such as Owen Jones, Gottfried Semper, Richard Redgrave, Christopher Dresser, William Morris and, in India, John Lockwood Kipling and Ernest Binfield Havell.

Britain's imperial preponderance at this time meant that the DSA's influence would be global in scope. From the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the Museum of Fine Art in Boston to a provincial museum in Kabul, Afghanistan, museums using the DSA template were set up in every nook of the world.² In India, DSA acolytes would occupy preeminent positions in all the art schools, from which vantage point they indirectly influenced or directly supervised the functioning of myriad "vocational" schools aimed at refashioning traditional or artisanal labor. The DSA agenda of the World Exhibitions percolated into the myriad rural and agricultural fairs staged by the British administration to reorganize the traditional economies of India.

The liberalism of the DSA enterprise quickly cast itself as savior of the decaying native industries and Indian artisanry under the onslaught of cheap mass-produced imports from the metropole. At first sight, therefore, this "preservative"



Figure 5.2
South Kensington-style
display cases of ceramic
tiles, Lahore Museum.

localizing and decentralizing *modus operandi* of the DSA apparatus in colonial India might appear to be a simple extension of metropolitan institutions. This apparent symmetry notwithstanding, liberal practice, however isomorphic, did not *play out in the same way* between metropole and colony. The DSA's preservative impulse, in fact, served as a perfect foil for the hallmark strategies of late imperialism: "indirect rule" and "decentralized despotism." With its creative founts both attributed to and administratively constrained by the localizing frames of caste and native authority, the Indian artisan became that much more susceptible to direct super-exploitation by the metropolitan center. Both political equality and (economic) contractual parity were set at a distance from a colonial sensibility that saw the vital bases of Indian civilization as immured in its customary relationships.

The headquarters for this gargantuan enterprise was the South Kensington Museum, famous today as the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A). Along with the attached art school, the museum coupled display with pedagogy, a format that became the norm followed throughout the empire. Scores of museums, exhibitions and schools were established in India and Britain alike under this synergetic model (Figure 5.2). By the end of the nineteenth century, there were no fewer than 180 schools of art under the DSA umbrella in Britain, with three-quarters of a million students enrolled in its various programs nationwide.

In India, using the four metropolitan schools as their model, a number of princely states (Baroda, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Alwar and others) set up similarly coupled institutions. Along with the museums, the DSA faction also instigated a series of exhibitions within India, their schedule also performing a well-choreographed tango with their lavish metropolitan counterparts. This network in turn facilitated the magnificence and generous size of Indian galleries at almost every international exhibition. The Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 held at South Kensington, by far the biggest world exhibition held in Britain until that point, was the most lavish manifestation of the DSA's career in India. As noted before, a direct result of the

1886 Exhibition was the sumptuously produced *Journal of Indian Art*, whose publishing run of 25 years made it the principal and exhaustive archival source for research on Indian manufacturers in this period. It is in this state-supported journal that we find in 1888 perhaps the first technical treatise, written by Chobe Raghu Das, assistant superintendent of Kutch, on "tie and dye" work in that province. The DSA can thus be justly credited with introducing to the Western world an important sartorial element of the anti-establishment, do-it-yourself counterculture of the hippie era.³

The *Journal of Indian Art* also provided the aesthetic counterpart to the scientific nomenclature of the six-volume *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, initiated as a systematic register for providing commodities for the different World Exhibitions from the 1870s onwards. The *Dictionary* was the principal reference source for captioning the collections of the different regional museums established by the DSA faction in India.⁴ This coupling of economic *Dictionary* and aesthetic *Journal* brings us to the question posed in the first paragraph of this article, a doubt if an article destined for the former had somehow been mixed up by the much-touted colonial postal system. Admittedly, a few of the articles in the *Journal* reflected concerns which are closer to natural history than art, but this can be attributed to the correlation drawn in the nineteenth century between natural fecundity and aesthetic principles.⁵ This homology also explains the inordinate role of medical doctors in the promotion of indigenous art industry in India, a fact also explainable by the fact that medical professionals, in addition to army engineers, were the only scientific corps available in the colony. Scientific studies of raw materials thus routinely appeared in the *Journal*, but with an explicit eye to their use for design potential and, consequently, commercial exploitation. For instance, successive issues in volume 8 of the *Journal* carried exquisite chromolithographs of the different grains of Indian timber and their amenability for furniture-making.

But salt production? The *Journal* article – painfully prosaic in its treatment, and reminiscent of a laboratory logbook – documents the different industrial processes involved in colonial salt production. It is the accompanying photographs that give us a better clue to this anomalous inclusion. The photographs offer panoramic views of a salt-producing field in western India, documenting the pools of brine pumped out of the ground, its separation and collection, its storage on site in mounds twenty feet high, and finally packaging into gunny bags. Situated in the Rajasthani desert, the blandness of the denuded landscape and the white sky visually function as a semantic desiccator, a blank wall foregrounding the picture of the salt-works as the scene of labor. Clusters of workers appear in silhouette bent over the brine pools, offering a unique image of successive stages in colonial resource extraction. However, two images stand out in their stark contrast; put next to each other, they become incredibly significant in terms of the schismatic nature of colonial production. The first image, against a white background, documents the tools employed by individual workers (Figure 5.3). The tools are customary, woven baskets suspended on stout twigs. Above all, it is this image, with its emphasis on hand-held tools, that justifies the inclusion of this article within the pages of the

Figure 5.3
Implements of salt
manufacture.

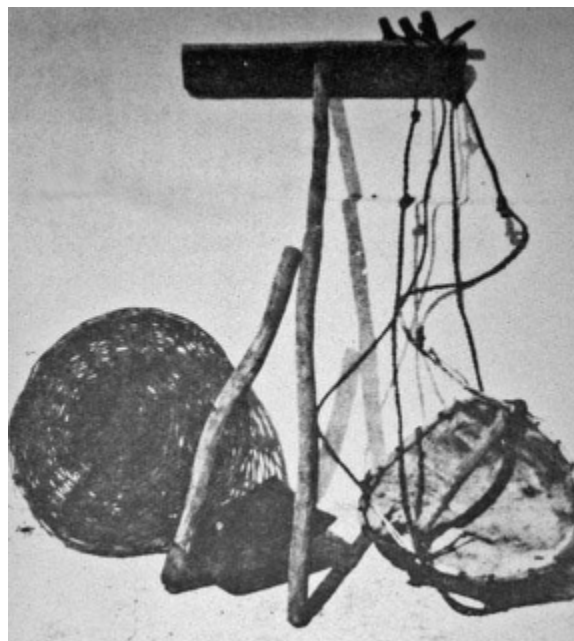


Figure 5.4
Railway train being
loaded with salt.



Journal. The labor of migrant labor in the salt-works is elevated to the level of a "craft:" super-exploited labor comes couched as artisanry.⁶ The second image is of the one conduit that makes the entire tableau of production make sense, linking this scenario with others beyond the semantically denuded landscape: i.e. the railway (Figure 5.4). Colonial production therefore appears as the bringing together of what is perceived as two "opposites:" the hand-based labor of the colonial "artisan" and the technological advances made in the metropole, epitomized here by the railway network. The important thing to note here is that the contrast between these modes is not the semiotic resolution of divergent "modes of production" but the *maintenance of a structure of difference between the two*.

This structure is indicative of a widespread "contrast" posed in nineteenth-century thought between mechanization and the body, industry and craft, city and

country, rationality and culture.⁷ At different times, different actors have tended to be the proponent of one or the other. On one hand, we can group together Andrew Ure, Karl Marx, Frederick Taylor and the architectural polemicist Sigfried Giedion. Giedion's *Mechanization Takes Command* exemplifies a "modernizing" ethos. On the "traditionalizing" front, there is John Ruskin, William Morris or Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who would bring salt production to a uniquely political turn in his Dandi March of 1930. The DSA's approach in India can be cast within this latter axis. As I have indicated before, the DSA's "preservative" attitude towards customary production in India, "liberal" in origin, can also be seen as a managerial impulse at the precise point where imperial capital found itself thwarted by non-modern forms of labor. The Indian artisan constitutes an interruptive, unruly figure; both the form of resistance to and a morphogenetic trigger for what David Harvey has termed "flexible accumulation."⁸

Marx's principal fallacy lay in his understanding of the global spread of capital as reliant on the stipulatory structure of the factory-form as the ineluctable *telos* on which industrial capitalism depended; the artisan was for him largely an atavism. As is well known, Marx considered mechanized industrialization as historically necessary for any mature political forms of opposition to emerge. In critiquing the *origins* of the labor theory of value theorized by predecessors such as Adam Smith, Marx left intact the *telos* of capital, which he located in the factory-form of labor organization. Marx's principal purpose here was to do away with the *topos* of liberal political economy that saw the transfer of labor-power as embodied in the product.⁹ In overturning the capitalist logic where "the category of *worker* is not abolished but extended to all men," the problem of communism becomes the premise that the world's peoples have to run through the socializing gauntlet of the factory in order to visualize themselves as its agents.¹⁰

Marx could not calculate with the artisan as the agent of capital. Against that "modernizing" grain, this essay makes the claim that "tradition" is an essential element, the name for the emergent, unguarded figure through which industrial capital expands at its peripheries. Custom is a critical component of capitalist socialization. In India, for instance, in contrast to the mechanistic armature with which the European laborer was sought to be cast, the artisan was understood as intrinsically part and parcel of larger administrative units, be it anthropological concepts of "village communities," caste, or tribe. Unburdened by the weight of this modernizing ethos, the DSA's atavistic formulations and influence in the colony afforded it an empirical understanding of a world that Marx had dismissed completely in his theorization of abstract labor.

This anthropological motif was sustained further in the delegations of "artisans" sent by the British government, under the DSA's superintendence, to the French exhibitions in order to report on Continental and other industries. In the detailed accounts submitted by British master-craftsmen on foreign production, the emphasis remained entirely on the methods and techniques of production, the division of labor, as opposed to the modes of socialization that made this possible.¹¹ Categorizing the components of manufacture into discrete functions carried out by

individual human bodies, the worker as artisan could still come across as master of his *métier*, impinging his crafts skills on the conception of the commodity as much as its execution. Through the figure of the artisan, the conceptual confusion between craft and work control could translate into the mid-century conceptual conflation between Art and Industry.

CRAFTING THE COLONY

The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked.

Karl Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India"

For Marx, the establishment of a network of railways, roadways and irrigation canals by the British in India connoted the inevitable reproduction of the metropolitan pattern of development, with full-scale industrialization followed by an eventual formation of an industrialized working-class.¹² In the event, the communications network set up by the British for streamlining its own economic interests neither *fully* transformed the Indian economy into an industrialized one, nor permitted any economic sector to be entirely unaffected by its ramifications.¹³ While the spread of the communications network, including the fourth biggest railway network in the world, did establish an industrial sector in India, at the time of independence (ninety-odd years after the introduction of railways) approximately 95 percent of labor was still employed in the non-industrial sector. More importantly, as I will argue in this paper, this development typifies a self-perpetuating asymmetry that characterizes cheap, informal labor as the hallmark of colonized and ex-colonized countries (Figure 5.5).

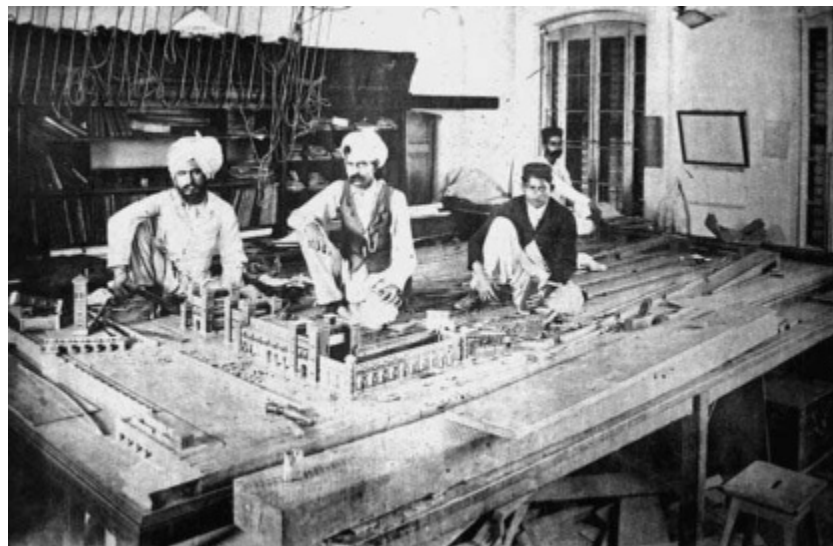


Figure 5.5
Native carpenters
building the model of
Howrah Station, the
terminus for the East
Indian and Bengal
Nagpur Railway.

In this sense, even within the metropolitan circuit, Giedion's image of self-propelled mechanization doing away with handicraft is not borne out in evidence. In the year of the Great Exhibition, there were more shoemakers than coalminers.¹⁴ As Richard Price has put it, the hallmark of labor organization in the building industry in Britain is the persistence of customary forms within the modern sector: "[I]t was, and has remained, an industry where the enduring importance of 'tradition' has been a preeminent feature of its structures."¹⁵ Although the building materials industry was certainly being revolutionized by the new space-time dynamic of the mechanized factory, the building trades remained remarkably archaic, both in relation to their work and their mobilization from above or below. Throughout the nineteenth century, the building industry in Britain was dominated by the small firm. The huge building booms experienced throughout the century owed more to new modes of credit and speculation – hardly a factor limited to the specific constraints of the industry itself – than to specific improvements in technology. More significantly, the industry remained largely unaffected by technological change. Even though factories were turning out bricks, tiles, iron and glass faster than ever before, the skills required for their assembly changed very little before the twentieth century.¹⁶ Consequently, there was very little transformation of the trades themselves. They remained resolutely archaic in their description even as their demography experienced a sea change from new contractual conditions.

In some ways, therefore, there are significant homologies in industrial transition in the metropole and in the colony, given that both witnessed a certain degree of continuity with the reorganization of customary sectors into modern ones. Certain sectors, mostly within the finishing trades, benefited from the redeployment of surplus into new economies of taste. In the colonies, however, large sectors of custom-marked and dependent labor, instead of undergoing the metropolitan transition from serfs into free agents, emerged into a theatre of neo-traditionalist wage-slavery. The key difference from the metropole is that custom was reinforced not only at the level of skills but also at the political and social level, thereby severely restricting movement across trades. Whether in the "agriculturalization" of the rural economy or the urbanization of pseudo-craft wage-labor, custom became not only the alibi for super-exploitation, but also the immobilizing edifice and mobilizing instrument for the emergence of colonial laborers into their unfreedom.

PUBLIC WORKS: LABOR ABCONSTRUCTED

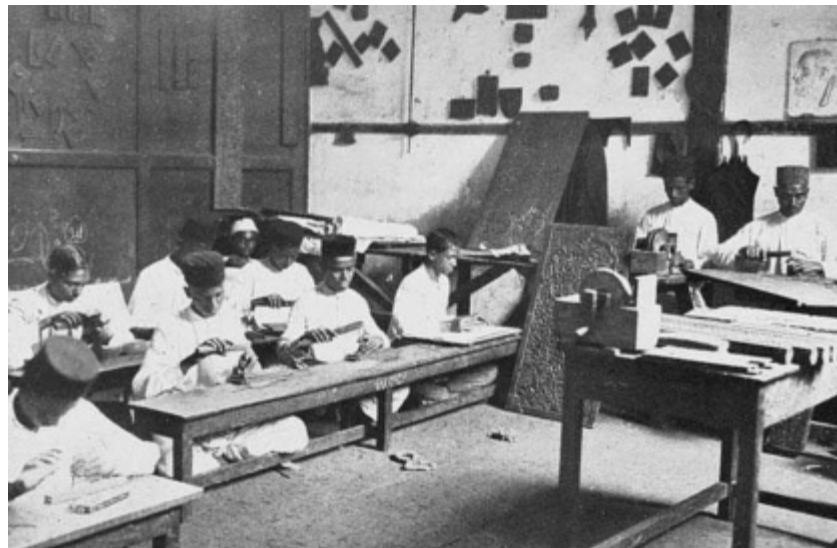
The DSA was a direct product of the influence of the Utilitarian faction on British government. Given its antipathy towards bureaucratic "jobbery" it is ironic that the Cole circle created one of the biggest bureaucracies in Europe of the nineteenth century. Equally piquant was the Utilitarians' supposed monument to efficiency and free-trade bolster in India, the Public Works Department (PWD), which paradoxically grew into the biggest building monopoly in the world in the same period. Generally speaking, the DSA's influence in India has been described as a contending

one with regard to that of the PWD, as representing a "traditionalizing," Indianizing axis against the mechanistic, "westernizing" thrust of the public works rationale. However, it can be strongly argued that both public works and artisanal "upliftment" operated in India by a comparable economic logic; indeed, in critical ways, public works in India can be described as more a *traditionalizing* force that was critically reliant on the artisan as an epistemic category of labor expropriation.

Competition from artisanal commodity production in government institutions aside, colonial firms significantly relied on the technical networks and facilities provided to them by the colonial government. Much of the task of providing this infrastructure fell to the Public Works Department (PWD). If the "general contract" – a new legal arrangement tabulating the different works on site into a single document – created a unifying format for the expropriation of diverse forms of labor in Britain, the PWD became the principal organ for the promulgation of specificatory norms in India. In both metropolitan and colonial situations, if pragmatic concerns about efficiency advanced specificatory controls as a means of introducing new consolidating standards, that same pragmatism also dictated a careful nuancing of these standards with regard to region and local custom. In India, as elsewhere, since the appropriation of labor was mediated by customary constraints, metropolitan technologies were continuously adapted to traditional practices and skills. Conversely, traditional craft skills were made to undergo their own processes of upgrading, and not necessarily in the direction of mechanization. The DSA's extensive documentation of indigenous technology in India should be read as the most visible – owing to its aesthetic framing – archive of this intricate, two-sided enterprise of part-modernization and hypo-traditionalization (Figures 5.6–5.9).

Perhaps because of its overwhelming identification with processes of so-called rationalization and economization, the PWD would, at the turn of the century, incorporate some of the decorative skills imparted by the DSA caucus in

Figure 5.6
Reay Art Workshops, held
at the J. J. School of Art
in Bombay in the early
1890s. Master artisans
from the surrounding
regions were brought in
to teach students.





Figures 5.7 (left) and 5.8 (below)
Models of artisans made for the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition under the direction of John Lockwood Kipling, now kept at the Lahore Museum. Details.



Figure 5.9
Building executed by
customary artisans in
Bulandshahr, United
Provinces, under the
supervision of Frederic
Salmon Growse.



key civic buildings of the time. This "traditionalist" effort – dubbed the Indo-Saracenic style – has invited commentary from a host of writers on colonial architecture in India. The effort there has largely concentrated on the representational aspects of these interventions in terms of colonial cultural politics. While the principal object of query seems here to be appropriateness of style, "style" itself is seldom brought up in this literature as an equally historical construct.¹⁷ In that context, Foucault's critiques of power/knowledge have proved all too convenient in identifying the PWD's systematizing strategy as a rationalist teleology. As for this latter view, we would have found the DSA faction very much in agreement.

In the ensuing section, I will attempt to demonstrate that if the DSA's interest in regional and traditional skills and competencies frames a certain discontinuity between modern industry and the variegations of community, then the systematizing impetus of the PWD also reveals a corresponding modification of imperial production systems across regional variations. In India, not only did PWD specifications often use local terms for the expenditure of labor time, but the schedule of work inevitably reflected the attempt to use traditional hierarchies and occupations to their best possible advantage. The hierarchy of skills was disbursed in such a way that artisanal patriarchs retained positions of higher skills and wages, while women and children were put to work as auxiliaries and load-carriers, earning a lower decimal on the wage scale (Figure 5.10). The experience of women in this sector echoed those in other sectors. Within customary modes of labor expropriation, women – bound by kinship restraints – often had a sort of permanent apprenticeship vis-à-vis the work of the male artisans. This entanglement fell apart with the men moving to the reorganized and formally defined work arenas, while women were pushed into tasks that required the hardest, and correspondingly the most unremunerated, physical labor. The extreme gender constraints emerging in

Note 1.—This Document may be kept either in English or the Vernacular language, as may be convenient.

DATE.	DESCRIPTION OF WORK.	LABOUR.														Cost of Labour.		
		Rt. a. p.	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 7 0	0 4 0	0 8 0	0 9 0	0 7 0	0 6 0	0 4 0	0 3 0	0 2 0	0 1 0	0 1 0	Rt.	a.	p.
1849.	Brought over, being the Total Expenditure to 30th April, inclusive..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,660	12	2	
MAY 1.	Works in General	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	0	2	0	
	Feeding Government Cattle	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	0	4	0	
" 2.	Grinding Chunam	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	3	8	1	11	6	
	Superstructure	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	9	..	3	68	36	..	17	10	8	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	20	..	..	2	12	0	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	4	..	0	10	0	
	Carriage of Chunam	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	0	0	
	Twisting "Unjoo" Rope	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	0	8	0	
	Clearing away obstructions from Road	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	31	..	0	7	3	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
" 3.	Superstructure	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	10	3	2	70	37	..	18	6	10	
	Grinding Chunam	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	8	..	1	15	0	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	27	..	..	3	13	0	
	Carriage of Chunam	..	..	..	..	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	8	0	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	12	1	10	0	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
" 4.	Superstructure	..	1	..	1	..	..	2	10	3	31	69	47	..	19	12	4	
	Grinding Chunam	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	2	11	1	13	0	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	26	..	..	3	8	0	
	Embankment for landing up Stones	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	17	..	2	7	6	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	9	..	1	7	0	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
" 5.	Superstructure	..	..	..	..	2	..	4	13	1	3	81	36	..	22	3	11	
	Excavation for Foundation	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	4	..	1	2	0	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	12	..	..	2	3	5	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	0	8	0	
	Embankment for landing up Stones	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	10	..	1	6	0	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
	Grinding Chunam	..	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	5	9	3	7	6	
" 6.	Superstructure	..	1	1	1	..	1	4	14	1	1	31	28	..	15	13	1	
	Grinding Chunam	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	5	6	7	3	9	0	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	14	40	15	..	7	0	0	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	5	..	0	11	6	
	Carriage of Chunam	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	8	0	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
" 7.	Superstructure	..	..	1	1	..	1	6	18	1	2	32	49	..	20	5	5	
	Grinding Chunam	..	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	5	5	7	3	11	6	
	Quarrying Stone	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	1	1	50	12	..	10	13	0	
	Grinding Red Earth	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	4	..	0	12	0	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	
" 8.	Works in General	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	0	2	0	
	Feeding Government Cattle	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	0	6	0	
" 9.	Superstructure	..	..	1	1	..	1	5	17	2	2	43	45	..	20	15	9	
	Grinding Chunam	..	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	4	4	5	3	7	0	
	Quarrying Stone, and Carriage	..	..	..	7	..	1	..	..	..	..	42	..	..	9	3	5	
	Ditto by Blasting	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	6	..	..	1	6	3	
	Black Earth Embankment	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	47	..	..	4	12	6	
	Works in General	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	6	0	

Figure 5.10
Standard labor and materials estimation sheet for public works. Note the top right-hand corner, specifying different rates for "biggery" (reserved for lower castes), "woman" and "boy."

the colonial public sphere thus forced large numbers of poor women into the subproletariat.¹⁸

The building industry demonstrates this shift quite clearly. Women entered the on-site labor market for the first time. Because this expropriation was routed through the patriarchal household, women were systematically excluded from work categories requiring higher skills, such as masonry, carpentry, etc. Throughout

South Asia, women were exclusively used as head-loaders to carry building materials between different parts of the construction site. While women carried the heaviest burdens on the public works projects, menial tasks such as "bheesties" (water-carriers, for curing and compacting) and "biggary" (human earth-movers) went to the lowest castes in the village. Clan chiefs and village headmen were appointed as foremen for work-gangs, thus reinforcing customary despotism to mobilize huge workforces with little or no wages at all. None of these relationships figure in the account books; costs therein are listed as quanta of building rather than discrete numbers of people employed. The colonial capture of custom is, in this sense, something like bringing irrational numbers into decimal. Everything depends on approximation, and each time the approximation is different.

In my opinion, the key import of public works in the modern world system should be measured not as an instrument of standardization so much as a differentiated *apparatus of capture* of heterogeneous subject-formations into abstract human labor. This is highlighted, for instance, by the persistent use of prison labor alongside wage-laborers throughout the colonial period. If one is attentive to the specificities of this capture, then the sheer economic quantum of the public works enterprise acquires much more importance than questions of style or visual representation. As the principal agency through which the colonial government established an architecture and infrastructure for governance, it was responsible for all of the administration's building tasks: bridges, canals, irrigation networks, military installations, camps and bivouacs, ports, harbours, railways, roads, telegraphs, wireless and other communications, colleges and schools, post offices, town halls, administrative offices, all manner of official residences, viceregal and gubernatorial mansions, marketplaces. The list extends to encompass the entire physical panoply of governmental control in the periphery.

Not only, therefore, was the PWD the constructional agency for the expansion of the imperial economy, but, as Peter Scriver has argued, its built matrix offers the historian today a paradigm for colonial bureaucracy in general.¹⁹ Charles E. Trevelyan, experienced "India-hand" and colleague of the DSA's Henry Cole, described the Indian Civil Service precisely in the metaphor of construction: as a "provisional temporary arrangement ... a sort of scaffolding which had been erected until the edifice of our empire is completed, and as it is completed, that scaffolding should be taken down."²⁰ The analogy of bureaucracy as governmental scaffolding would be used in both directions. In 1858, Richard Strachey, scion of a family of renowned bureaucrats, ancestor of the Bloomsbury set members of the same name, and a founder-ideologue of the PWD, would equate the public works imperative as precisely a form of government by default:

Altogether different in its nature is the outlay on account of the wants of the Administration of Government. Here direct duties have to be performed – the Country is to be protected from foreign invasion – Justice is to be administered – Education is to be given. Prudence will dictate the necessity for economy in such expenditure, and it is not to be denied that the excellence of the Administration at once affects the material prosperity of the Community. But the motives for

action are quite distinct. The obligations on a Government to maintain a pure and efficient Administration are *moral not financial*; and the duties to be performed are absolute, irrespective of cheap or dear ... Here too we may remark that our proposed classification being intended to have a practical character, it seems useless to make any attempt to define Public Works rigorously, or to distinguish with any nicety *a priori* those charges which should appear under this head from those which should be excluded from it. Such questions are better disposed of by authority, or *in detail as they arise*.²¹

Indeed, the full-fledged establishment of the public works agenda epitomizes a new form of economic modeling of the colony – from one based largely on revenue and resource-extraction to a more active cultivation of economic potential. Arthur T. Cotton – the celebrated military engineer whose pioneering damming projects on the Godavari and Kaveri Rivers in South India had, alone, doubled the area under cultivation in the central Deccan plateau – perceived as much when he reviewed the public works agenda in India in the years leading up to the establishment of the PWD.²² Highlighting his own experience in the area, Cotton criticized the passive preservationism of the colonial administration and its overweening reliance on indirect revenue and its undue regard for customary constraints. Decrying the intellectual bankruptcy of the Orientalists, he saw little possibility of any dynamism in the Indian economy or increase in revenue without a drastic infusion of infrastructure into traditional centers of production. For Cotton, “interior” India, the India beyond the big coastal trading ports, was an economically untapped and hermetic reservoir waiting to be aerated by the introduction of roadways and railways. Cotton spoke with the weight of evidence in his hands. After his landmark interventions into the irrigational arrangements of Tanjore district, that district returned a larger revenue than any other district in India.

The principal shift in economic policy, Cotton contended, had to draw on the realization that economic growth could not be infinitely sustained by the mere augmentation and finessing of existing revenue structures to embrace the more recessive areas of economic activity. Rather, colonial policy should put into place infrastructure that would accelerate the rate of production, thus enabling the native producer to pay higher rates of revenue from increased economic growth. In other words, if the British had to amplify latent productivity levels in India, the government would have to invest overwhelmingly in infrastructure beyond any immediate expectation of pecuniary return. Cotton’s commentary coincided with a sea change in the administrative stance on public works. In January 1850, a public works commission was established in each presidency, in order to identify the key administrative goals in those regions. With the commissions, the East India Company finally reoriented its public works goals from mercantile maintenance to full-time administration, from patching up the shards of the decrepit Mughal infrastructure to active construction of new infrastructural networks.

Eight decades later, the reception of John Maynard Keynes’s *General Theory* reiterated critical aspects of this hothouse strategy.²³ Keynes’s theory of economic underperformance emerged in a period of extreme depression and mass unemploy-

ment between two major world wars that transformed the composition of empire. If for Cotton under-extraction in terms of revenue was linked to nonoptimization of economic potential, then for Keynes underperformance was related to the inability to generate sufficient demand. Both Cotton and Keynes leveled their attack on the glorification of thrift in economic policy: Cotton towards the preservative and non-intrusive approach of the colonial administration into native economic spheres, and Keynes towards the affirmation on savings in classical economics. For both, the key tool of policy lay in managing "expectations" for the future; both of them also perceived government as the principal instrument to fill the gap between economic underperformance and full optimization.²⁴

The historical circumstances of these two interventions also offer another, and somewhat uncanny, comparison. Cotton's argument for increased governmental intervention used an abstract economic model in order to pry away the administrative fixation on the existing, i.e. on the historical residues of Mughal infrastructure. Keynes's principal contribution was to abstract from the recent historical context of the economy and provide instead a prototypical psychological profile of demand and consumption. With the end of the Second World War, Keynes would see his ideas painfully used for Britain and Europe in the very manner that Cotton had envisioned for India. The United States would use critical elements of Keynes's theories to set up the Marshall Plan, a demand-generating device to make European countries absorb American commodities. "The American policies, we may say, had Keynesian effects; they were not undertaken for Keynesian reasons."²⁵ The Marshall Plan – with significant investment into public works enterprises – would become a strategy to wrest the mantle of empire away from Britain's tattered domain, just as the public works agenda of a century earlier had been useful to wrest the mantle of empire in India from the Mughals. However, this *theoretical* isomorphism between these two moments cannot be extended into actual similarity of practice. The public works agenda in India, as we shall see, was no Marshall Plan.

REALIZING RESERVE, PRODUCING SURPLUS

We have seen how Cotton perceived the precolonial economy as capital kept in reserve, to be liberated by infrastructural intervention. For Marx, in the production cycle, labor realizes both itself and other components thus kept as reserve into *value*. In *Capital I*, Marx theorized the principle of reserve through his definition of "surplus." As we have seen earlier, surplus is the ability of the worker to produce labor in excess over-and-against her ability to reproduce the means of her subsistence. Marx's excision of labor as an abstract predicate of the subject rather than the individual, therefore, reveals the worker as an aggregate, standing-reserve within the circuit of production.²⁶ The production of value is in terms of aggregates of labor, not in multiples of *things*. As the onset of mechanization increasingly displaces human input in production, it locates abstract labor-power in a differential relationship with *aggregate populations* rather than individual workers.

The abstraction of labor by technology is thus the other face of a surplus

population that is made both redundant and redeployable. Marx's critique here is of course directed at Malthusian theories of population, which conceived of population in a direct, rather than flexible, relationship to production. In theorizing this redundancy as a differential relationship affecting separate parts of the population, at various times and in a variety of ways, through diverse cycles of production, Marx seemed to be hinting at the *entire bulk* of the population as eventually becoming a surplus. Seen in this way, the surplus population does not indicate an extraneous sphere, in secondary dependence on a primary work-force; rather, it underlines the potential of industry to expropriate labor from *any* section of the population. As the human becomes an appendage of the machine, so does population become an appendage of industry.

In the colony, custom was a critical weapon through which this surplus could be managed. Take, for example, the DSA-aficionado George Birdwood's book, *The Industrial Arts of India*, itself synthesized from his report for the 1878 Paris Exposition.²⁷ There, Birdwood could depict the artisan as preternaturally mobile *within* the norms of custom. In the following paragraph, the tremendous migrational movements of displaced labor set into motion by colonial revenue and market practices are described in terms of a predisposition written in the very corpus of Indian tradition:

The village communities have been the stronghold of the traditionary [*sic*] arts of India; and where these arts have passed out of the villages into the wide world beyond, the caste system of the Code of Manu has still been their best defence against the taint and degradation of foreign fashions. The typical Hindu village consists exclusively of husbandmen; but as agriculture and manufactures cannot exist without each other, the village was obliged to receive a number of artisans as members of its hereditary governing body. But they are "*strangers within the gate*," who reside in the village solely for the convenience of the husbandmen, on a sort of service contract. It is a perpetual contract, but in the lapse of 3,000 years, the artisans have constantly terminated their connexion with a village, or have had to provide for sons in some other place, and they at once sought their livelihood in the towns which gradually began to spring up everywhere round the centers of government, and of the foreign commerce of the country. It is in this way that the great polytechnical cities of India have been formed.²⁸

In describing deskilling as the ruse to introduce relatively unskilled populations into the industrial workforce (women, children, paupers – we could extrapolate this to the colonial indigene),²⁹ Marx was attempting to theorize the possibility that different (unmodern) sociological formations, in lieu of a ready-made "working class," were in fact appropriable as (modern) industrial labor. "Population," in this sense, is simply a term to manage what Deleuze and Guattari have called the *socius*, in its irrational and inefficient entirety, as surplus. Since Marx needed the space-time parenthesis of the factory in order to establish labor as an aggregate entity, he could only incompletely theorize the *uneven* coding of labor through different modes of socialization.³⁰ In describing the surplus population as evidence of capitalism's tendency towards subjective ablation – the substitution of "mature" workforces by "immature" ones as *direct agents of labor* – Marx's theories can lead us into the part-insertion of the subject within capital but cannot outline its substantive, even

enduring, features. Hampered by Hegel, Marx is unable to theorize the ontological polyvalence of the subject – custom supplemented, rather than superseded, by abstract labor – as the basis for the global super-exploitation of labor. Constrained by his own philosophical framework, Marx could not describe the global subject of capitalist modernity as *abconstructed* – i.e. normed away from the normal.

The primary function of the public works agenda in the colonies was to facilitate the abconstruction of the native as custom-coded abstract labor. In his book on public works in India, written in 1875, William Thomas Thornton decried what he deemed the half-hearted and ill-conceived character of most PWD projects in India. Funds that would have been better directed towards one or two projects that could actually be completed were instead frittered away in fractions amongst more than a dozen projects, all of which then subsequently languished for further infusion of funds; this, simply out of the political compulsion to find employment for vast sections of the population. At the end of every working season, instead of a hundred miles of useful canal or road, there would be a "dozen or more disjointed portions connected with nothing and leading nowhere."³¹ In primarily conceiving of the PWD as an employment agency for indigent villagers, roads were frequently laid to either bank of a river, with a bridge nowhere in sight, nor likely in the near future, since the higher capital required for its technological complexity was basically unavailable. Rather than act as an employment agency, Thornton argued, echoing Cotton, the PWD should be conceived of as a state organ instigating the comprehensive modernization of the economy.

Marx's theorization of the incomplete projects in the London real-estate market is resonant here. A liberal dupe to the ruse of the theories of modernization, Thornton could not read this ritual incompleteness as precisely an instrument of labor socialization, rather than infrastructure-building, at the periphery. As the principal agency responsible for the construction of buildings, roadways and railways across the colonial landscape, the PWD's role, through this spectacle of "busy-work," was to *affect* a governmental infrastructure where *in fact there was none*, at least not in any responsible sense of the word. Given the size of its roster, the PWD is remarkable for the minimal infrastructural imprint it left on the ground. A substantial portion of its work was devoted, in fact, to famine relief. As has been well documented, with the decay of older, indigenous infrastructures, a direct outcome of the administration's failure to provide an infrastructure equal to the demands made by the imperialist economy was the persistent incidence of famine throughout the colonial period. In many regions, the introduction of railways drove up speculation in the subsistence crop, increasing starvation amongst the population; since most of their commodities circulated through traditional systems of reciprocal exchange, artisans were especially vulnerable at these times.³² Since intervening in price speculation went against the government's sanctimonious conceits of free trade and noninterference in private enterprise, public works became the default mechanism and employment apparatus for the perpetuation of the subsistence economy. Trapped in super-exploitation, these forms of abconstructed labor were left to oscillate between the field and the factory.

In the event – and as Thornton rightly recognized – the work was largely Sisyphean in its approach, *but designedly so*. Private enterprise, the so-called staple of the colonial economy which the administration was devised to support, was hardly interested in bringing the skills of the general population up to expropriable, “mature” levels. Public works rather performed the defalcatory function of socializing labor at the subsistence level, using them to build roads, canals, reservoirs or bunds as a series of knee-jerk, localized maneuvers without any long-term plans for development. The spasmodic character of this enterprise is attested to by the following recommendation made to the landmark Indian Famine Commission of 1881:

[If] ... directly distress appears to be deepening by unusual numbers flocking to these works, some of whom come from some distance, or are not ordinary earthworkers, works should be multiplied throughout the distressed region. When the distress shows itself to be of such a nature as would amount in many instances of starvation, if it were not for Government intervention, works should be opened to such an extent *that every large village should have some work available within a distance of (say) four miles*. For this purpose long works, such as roads or canals traversing the distressed tracts, are much better than tanks or reservoirs. Work should be simultaneously commenced at several places throughout the length of a road or canal, such places being about six miles apart, and the villages going to the gang nearest their village. All these works should be under the Public Works officers, and every sort of human being should be admitted to them, the only condition being that for so much work he or she gets so much pay. *The rate of remuneration should be raised with the increased price of grain* ... Into these gangs no man or boy above 12 years of age should be admitted unless his physical appearance plead for him; from them no woman (except a few professional earthworkers) or child should be excluded. Task-work should be strictly exacted.³³

It is because of the recommendations of the 1881 Famine Commission that Ernest Binfield Havell, graduate of South Kensington and Superintendent of the School of Art in Madras, was deputed to report on the arts and industry of that presidency in 1884. As Havell's brief put it, the government had now found it “desirable to encourage a diversity of occupations, and to develop new branches of industry in the Presidency.”³⁴ It was because of the same commission that from the 1880s we see a renewed interest on the part of the administration in encouraging artisanal manufactures, both because of the specific vulnerability of artisans during famine and because the encouragement of indigenous trades could offer a potential source of self-sustenance at those times. And it was because of the ramifications of the Famine Commission and the compilation of the above reports that George Watt compiled his enormous, six-volume *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, the early steps toward which are apparent throughout his curatorial strategy for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886. It is against this background of famine that art-historical research such as Ernest Havell's lavish documentation of “peasant jewellery” from the Madras presidency entered the pages of the *Journal of Indian Art*.³⁵

If the early rarefied industrial framework of the Madras School had gradually

given way to the DSA's fetishization of the oriental artisan by the 1860s, by the 1880s this framing was deemed to be particularly appropriate to economic thought and official policy as well. In political terms, this abconstruction of labor as artisanry dovetailed well with the imperative of administrative devolution at a time of increased economic penetration. Through regionally specific initiatives, the 1880s witnessed the creation of a comprehensive framework for the re-induction of customary skills as an integral element of the subsistence economy (Figure 5.11). The pageantry of the 1886 Exhibition would mark the apotheosis of this economic abconstruction; its spectacle covered over the global incidence of famine.

EXTRA-INTERIORITY: THE ARCHITECTURE OF PUBLIC WORKS

In the history of politically motivated shifts in style in state-supported architectural projects, the contrast between Edwin Lutyens's New Delhi and Le Corbusier's Chandigarh occupies a special place. Other than the fact that each was realized under the conception of a vanguard international architect, perhaps no other two such large-scale projects, involving planning and architectural tasks of a comparable scale, and undertaken within a few decades of each other by a government of the same country, present such diametric extremes of physiognomy and character. Whether it be in the use of materials, the centralized radial plan as opposed to the decentralizing grid, or the technique of ornamentation, the polarities between these two sites present a paradigmatic case study in the political history of architecture relating to imperialist and nationalist, of traditionalizing and modernizing agendas. And yet this willful contraposition did not rule out the continuation of administrative apparatuses from the old order to the new.

In spite of India's exemplary and graduated transition – exemplary in the sense that it was one of the few decolonizing countries that could, for a while, ward off the neocolonizing yoke, which in most of Africa and Latin America was kept intact – in one major and significant aspect, the mode of construction of these two antipodal capitol complexes remained, remarkably, the same. Both Chandigarh and New Delhi were realized under the aegis of the Public Works Department. The continuity of the PWD apparatus from colony to nation meant that both Neoclassical palace and modernist bureau were realized by the same agency, stone by stone, cement-load by cement-load: semi-skilled, semi-rural, seasonally reliant

Figure 5.11
Customary artisanal tools
from India collected by
the South Kensington
Museum. Left: "Tile-ing
and Pottery" tools. Right:
"Plasterer's" Tools.



on agricultural subsistence, economically displaced migrant labor. The reliance of the construction on these antediluvian, hand-intensive, deskilled and unskilled poor seemed almost to mock the overblown scale of these buildings, given the constituency in whose name they were produced.

This dissonance was attested to by a report on the Public Works Department, published in the interregnum between these two projects. In 1946, a labor investigation committee was formed under the aegis of the nascent International Labor Organization and the transitional government of India with the Indian National Congress at the helm. The following observation spelled out clearly what the committee considered to be both the principal failure of imperialism and the principal challenge to the independent nation-in-waiting:

The most serious problem of labour under the C[entral].P.W.D. is the prevalence of [sub]contract system of labour. From the financial point of view, it is, no doubt, convenient to Government to have this system, because it enables Government to give the work to the *lowest bidder, and thus to get a piece of work done cheaply and without much administrative work*. However, from the standpoint of labour, the system, as it stands today, is undoubtedly very unsatisfactory. It is clear that, if Government cannot abolish the system, they must at least endeavour to put that system on a proper basis so as to improve the conditions of labour under it and to secure for the workers employed by [sub]contractors same rights and privileges as those for other types of labour as far as possible ... It will thus be seen that, under the C.P.W.D., [sub]contract labour predominates. The system of recruitment of [sub]contract labour is similar to that in most other industries. *The contractors (known as thikadars) advance moneys to the chowdhries, who go to the village and procure labour. The chowdhries advance moneys to the workers (who are usually known to them) and bring them to the works. The advances are later on recovered from the wages to be paid ... it has been laid down that ... the contractor shall pay to labourers not less than the wages paid for similar works in the neighbourhood; that the contractor shall at his own cost provide his labour with huttings on an approved site and shall make arrangements for conservancy and sanitation in the labour camp to the satisfaction of the local public health and medical authorities ... It will be seen, [however,] that, on the whole, regulation of labour conditions in the case of contract labour is not satisfactory ... It is a peculiar feature of the C.P.W.D. that while the department is concerned largely with construction of buildings and other amenities so as to provide office and residential accommodation, it has not been able to attend to the housing requirements of its own men, except to a small extent.*³⁶

The irony was not lost on the newly arrived creators of either New Delhi or Chandigarh, although both drew on their Arts and Crafts background to frame this hand-intensive super-exploited labor in the tactile dexterity of the artisan, with direct overtures to the country's sumptuary arts and crafts. On his part, Lutyens fell back on the DSA-established schools and the more immediate legacy of Curzon (Figure 5.12).³⁷ Students from the different schools of art were put to work on the murals decorating the interiors of the complex, their output couched as the rediscovery and manifestation of a "national," rather than institutionalized, ethos of handicraft.³⁸ Le Corbusier's own ideological predilections, best articulated in *The Decorative Arts of Today*, did not permit him to directly invoke nineteenth-century

Figure 5.12
Migrant labor on the
building site of New
Delhi.



Figure 5.13
Migrant labor on the building site
of Chandigarh.



theories of ornament. He commemorated the artisanal construct in quite another way: since India was the perfect foil to develop the notion of the autochthon in building – a civilizational view that went with his new *beton brut* aesthetic – workers were encouraged to leave their hand-prints on the rough cement finish of the concrete (Figure 5.13).

The structure of super-exploitation perpetuates itself beyond colonialism – the new nation-state was hardly the panacea that was propounded by the advocates of nationalism. Given the surrogate relationship that we have set up in this chapter between the “traditionalist” aesthetic policies of the DSA faction in India and the customary rubric applied to extract labor from the economic periphery, we can see this failure perhaps presaged in Havell’s curious adoption of the *swadeshi* theme – otherwise primarily monopolized by the Indian National Congress – in the last gasps of the DSA’s influence in India. Elsewhere, I have posed Havell’s embrace of the artisan as the primary economic constituent of the Indian nation against Gandhi’s own construction of himself – with significant debt to John Ruskin – as an artisanal spinner.³⁹ Behind this peculiar parallelism, I will suggest, lies a surrogate story of competition between colonial and native capitalists and their particular relationship to commercial and quasi-industrial capitalism at the periphery. If the colonial administration used the DSA’s keywords to phrase its economic understanding of the periphery, then nationalist ideologues had to evolve their own frameworks, *mutatis mutandis*, such that the artisan could both become the flashpoint of nationalist contestation and produce the required continuum of authority through which a new nationalist class could legitimize its power. In a volume where the “colonial” is marked off as a separate historiographic frame, in closing, these contractual continuities between the colonial and the “national” cannot be overemphasized.

Chapter 6: Between Copying and Creation

The Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details

Vikramaditya Prakash

In Jaipur, a city of much lore and tourism, one does well to be skeptical. If you, for instance, visit the sprawling offices of the Jaipur Public Works Department (JPWD), and proceed to make friends with its innumerable Peons, Draftsmen, Assistant Architects, Senior Architects, Chief Architects, Engineers, and all their subordinates and superiors, then, after innumerable rounds of hot chai, the conversation usually turns to the legendary *Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details*. Indeed, it is the most junior ranks of the establishment, the Architectural Draftsmen, who will sit you down and insist on narrating the *Portfolio's* story with much ceremony. They will tell of the fabulous collections of full-size details drawn with the immaculate penmanship of draftsmen of old. They will also tell of the Jeypore School of Art, where the draftsmen were trained. They will sing the praises of the erstwhile Maharajas of Jaipur who patronized their work. There is awe in their eyes and voices. It all has the familiar nostalgia of "those days gone by."

The evidence is in the back rooms of the JPWD. Here, in certain select drawers of long rows of filing cabinets, neatly labeled in ink that has long faded away, are the old 24" × 36" sheets of yellowing, torn cartridge paper, embellished with architectural details, drafted with painstaking detail. The drawings are incomplete and seem to be the discards. Where, then, are the originals? When you ask, the conversation turns to other matters, such as the authority of the legendary Col. Jacob saab, the English head of the PWD, who had the drawings made, and then, of course, must have taken the originals back with him to London. Other fingers point to the Maharaja's inscrutable crypts. Still others point to sources that, if admitted to, might cause the draftsmen to lose their jobs.

The draftsmen are usually Kumawats, the Rajput sub-caste traditionally responsible for building. Today they seem to be in disarray. Most of the Kumawats I visited had either changed profession or were long retired. None of them seemed to have any extant actual building skills either. Drafting was their only forte. They blame the bureaucratic priorities of the democratic government of contemporary India for their ills, as everyone seems to do in India.

Institutional Frameworks ■

A copy of the printed version of the *Portfolio* can quite easily be found in the Jaipur Public Library (Figure 6.1). Located in the heart of the old city, the library is a motley building, firmly set in the city fabric, with its characteristic background pink facade thinly decorated with a mixture of European and Indian architectural motifs. Its architecture is a curious and messy hybrid. The date on its facade, 1865, locates its establishment in the reign of Maharaja S. Ram Singh, that very “modern” Maharaja of Jaipur, who nominally ruled Jaipur as a “princely state” under the British from 1852 to 1885. One enters through a large semicircular opening into a narrow open-to-sky courtyard populated by phalanxes of parked bicycles, scooters and motorcycles. The library itself can be accessed through narrow stairs leading up to the second floor of the building. Quiet gentle old men leisurely read newspapers here, slouched in rickety chairs under slowly spinning ceiling fans suspended far below the high ceiling with flaking plaster.

The *Portfolio*, the librarian insists, must be studied on the premises, for the library does not check out books anymore. The stacks require special permission for access. Located in a tall, boarded room, they consist of rows of old books shrouded in a thick layer of dust that is speckled by slivers of light as it arises around your feet. There does not seem to be a single book from the twentieth century: everything is an original edition from the nineteenth. Here you find the complete collection of the *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, the complete works of John Ruskin, Owen Jones’s *Grammar of Ornament*, Rudyard Kipling’s famous novels, and, of course, the *Jeypore Portfolio*. Clearly, they all belong together.

While the industrial socioeconomic juggernaut was transforming the very fabric of English society and culture in the nineteenth century, advocates of what came to be known as the Arts and Crafts movement positioned themselves as some of the most vocal critics of that transformation, championing the moral value of hand-crafted labor, as exemplified by the medieval guilds, as central to the preservation



Figure 6.1
Jeypore (Jaipur) Public
Library (exterior).

and advancement of British society. It is not surprising that these decorative arts and crafts enthusiasts seized on the spectacular success of the Indian section in the 1851 Great Exhibition to assert their claims, holding Indian crafts as an example of a living crafts society, threatened by mechanization and corrupting British influence.

This Indian stereotype was of course primarily generated to verify the crafts advocates' conception of what Britain properly ought to be, in their view, and had little to do with contemporary craft practices in India as such. Most had never been to, and had no intentions of visiting, India. However, a small group of decorative Arts and Crafts enthusiasts did actually go to India to try and engage the ideals of their movement. They were motivated mostly by what they perceived to be the rapid decline of Indian crafts, largely as a consequence of the colonial administration. They intended to live out, to practice and fulfill the stereotype. As in Britain, the crafts enthusiasts practicing in India positioned themselves as a resistance movement within the margins of the larger official enterprise. At the same time, paradoxically, they had to justify their work and beliefs as a legitimate part of the civilizing mission of the colonial project.

In this essay I trace the work and ideologies of a few of these crafts enthusiasts, working in the late nineteenth century in the princely state of Jaipur, during the reign of Sawai Ram Singh (1852–80). By working for a local maharaja (however nominal his independence), rather than the colonial administration, they felt that they were in a special situation to fulfill their mission. J. L. Kipling, the leading exponent of Arts and Crafts ideals in India, made their ambivalent case in administrative terms as follows:

[The] development of local effort under sympathetic guidance seems to point to some advantages of local self-government, which, rightly understood, means ... [the] right movement in art, [which involves] measures which develop local intelligence, and which, leaving a district under the guidance of its own natural leaders to form its own projects and employ its own agency ... may give free play to the skill and fancy of the native craftsman in his own natural line.¹

The ambiguity of Kipling's argument lies in the proposal for "sympathetic guidance." How was such an administrator to impart "sympathetic guidance" such that the craftsmen would develop in their "own natural line," free of influence and contingency? In a situation where the guidance is coming from a source that is identified with power, any development in its "own natural line," however "sympathetic" the guidance, is bound to be framed by the conditions of its production. The belief that craftsmen could develop entirely according to their own precolonial practices was therefore hopelessly idealistic, and the Arts and Crafts enthusiasts were doomed to fail in their enterprise. The interesting question here is not whether the crafts advocates would have been more successful if they had pursued alternative strategies. What was always impossible cannot be repaired. Rather, the historical question that this essay seeks to engage is the manner in which the identities and agencies of both the colonizers and the colonized were formed on both sides of the collapsing frames of their stereotype-bound colonial relationship.

SAMUEL SWINTON JACOB

One of the most sustained efforts to train native craftsmen was made by Colonel Samuel Swinton Jacob in the production of the *Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details*. From 1866 to 1912, Jacob, an engineer by training and an ardent enthusiast of the decorative arts and crafts by affection, worked obediently and tirelessly as the head of the Jeypore Public Works Department. Although Jacob strictly acted under the orders of the Maharaja of Jeypore, in the colonial records he was an officer of the Imperial Government. Thus even though his salary was paid by the Jaipur Durbar, he was subject to the code of conduct of the colonial government's civil servants.² Questions pertaining to issues like Jacob's promotion and sanctioning of furlough were routed through the Resident to the Imperial authorities for approval.³ Jacob, however, was very careful in ensuring that his conduct met with full approval of the colonial authorities. In fact he was very anxious to ensure that his efforts were noticed and recorded by his superiors.⁴ He was anxious that it be appreciated that by working in a "native" state he was still working in the interests of the Empire. In 1872 he noted in his report "that an officer who works conscientiously, benefits indirectly our own Government by his connection with a native state."⁵ That Jacob especially inserted this in his report indicates that this was not always a foregone conclusion. At the same time, Jacob made special efforts to project the impression that the maharajas were "enlightened" and "progressive," suggesting thereby that native interests were being ably served without the direct intervention of the English. It was in part as a consequence of this that Jacob and his department were left alone by the colonial authorities.⁶ In this manner Jacob was able to negotiate himself into the convenient position of being in the favor of his British superiors and yet not subject to the political machinations of the Department.

However, while relations between Jacob and Ram Singh were cordial, much to Jacob's chagrin they remained distant. For Ram Singh, Jacob was part of the British presence that was forced upon him. On the one hand Ram Singh admired and copied the British. But for the most part he chafed under their domination. Jacob, on the other hand, was present in Jaipur out of choice.

ON ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTING

One of the earliest skills championed by Jacob was architectural drafting.⁷ He made considerable efforts to teach this skill to his native employees and ensured that the highest standards of draftsmanship were maintained in the drawings produced by his department. Jacob's biggest production using the new skills of architectural drafting was *The Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details*, the compilation of which was started when Jacob was constructing the museum building, Albert Hall, in Jaipur (1876–85). Apparently whenever he needed details for a particular section of the building, he called upon a draftsman who would supply him the requisite detail. "In time," a reviewer notes, Jacob "employed this draftsman full time to record architectural details from existing buildings."⁸ The idea was that these

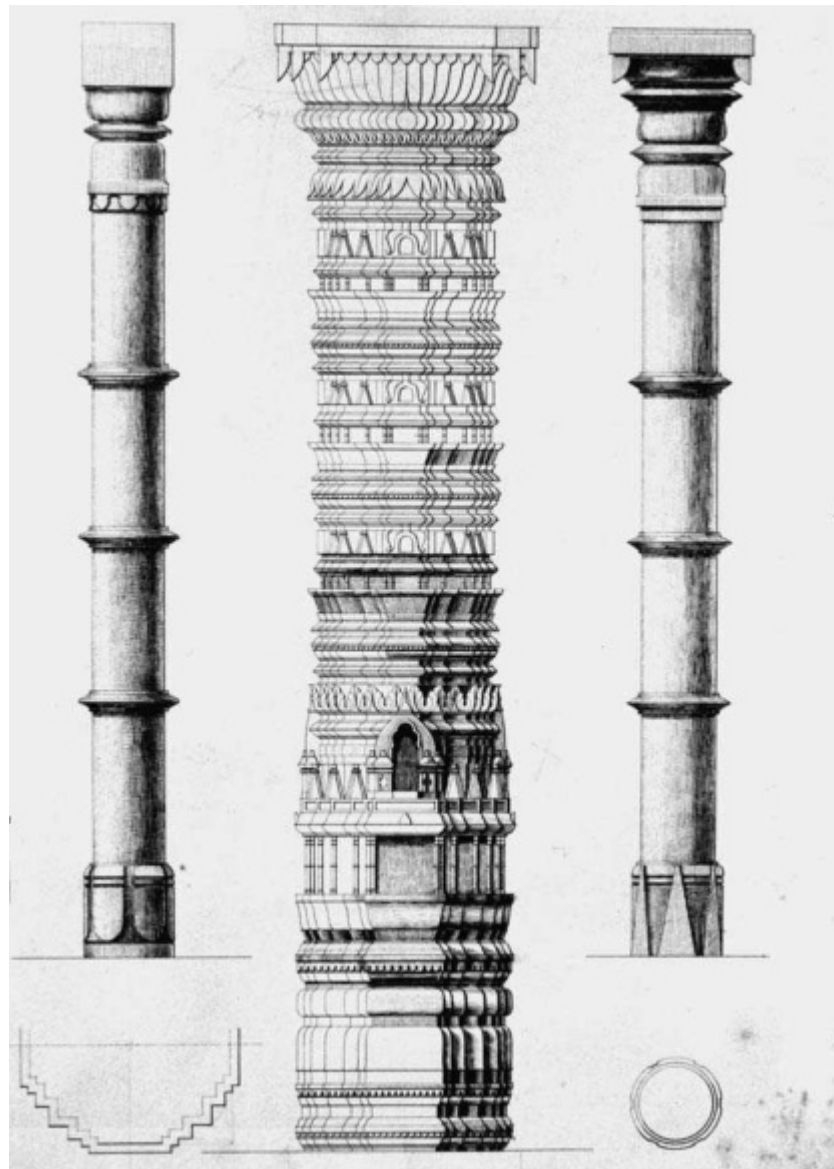


Figure 6.2
A drawing prepared for
the *Jeypore Portfolio*.

details would function as a ready reference that could be utilized whenever necessary (Figure 6.2).

But the underlying motivation for making the *Portfolio*, as Jacob explained in his introduction to the published volumes (first printed in 1890), was as a critique of the contemporary buildings being constructed elsewhere in British India by the Public Works Department or “PWD” of the Imperial Government. The PWD was responsible for the physical infrastructure of the colonial administration and this entailed the design and construction of a wide range of buildings, from railway stations, post-offices and administration buildings to storage sheds, guard rooms

and latrines. Even today the most identifiable relics and symbols of India's colonial history are the countless standardized, simple, and functional structures that dot the urban and rural Indian landscape. In Jacob's view, these mundane PWD buildings were dull, monotonous and inappropriate in general.

In the larger scheme of colonial-modern development in nineteenth-century India, the work done by Jacob's Jeypore Public Works Department was anomalous and relatively inconsequential compared to that of the Imperial Government. As Peter Scriver discusses in an earlier essay in this collection, the PWD engineers' propensity for rationalization, standardization and control in their design thinking not only enabled the physical construction of the extensive apparatus of Empire, but also conceptually constructed a "modern" frame of reference in the shifting identity politics of colonial India.⁹

Operating at the margins of the PWD's Empire-building project, the Arts and Crafts enthusiasts in India regarded the PWD as the quintessential representation in practice of precisely the same ideology they were opposing at home. As the target of their critique, their argument thereby depended on the existence of the Public Works Department. By opposing the work of the Imperial Public Works Department, they were aligning themselves with an image of what Britain ought to be, and, by extension, what the British Empire ought to be in India. But in the latter sense the objectives of the crafts enthusiasts were, of course, aligned with those of the Public Works system, regardless of its denigrated forms and norms; that is, with the legitimization of Empire.

The primary objects of the crafts enthusiasts' censure were the "standard plans" and "pattern book" buildings they attributed to the PWD. Accounting for many of the small infrastructural buildings that had to be erected every day, "standard plans" were routinely compiled at both the imperial and provincial levels of the PWD system and circulated to the executive engineers in the districts as design guidelines. Officially, as Scriver points out, it was intended that these plans would always be adapted to local constraints.¹⁰ In the skeptical view of the crafts enthusiasts, however, this system of standard plans, as implemented in practice, completely disregarded context. The PWD engineers were accused accordingly of being indifferent, and even hostile, to indigenous designs and craftsmen. "There are hundreds of such buildings in India," Kipling protested, which "cut up into longer or shorter lengths ... serve for law courts, schools, municipal halls, dak bungalows, barracks, post offices and other needs of our high civilization."¹¹ F. S. Growse, an outspoken Indian Civil Service officer of Bulandshahr, charged that these "standard plans" were "forced upon universal acceptance throughout the length and breadth of the province, with little or no regard to local conditions as regards material, or the habits of the people, or the capacity of the workmen."¹²

But unlike many of the military officer-engineers of the Public Works Department of British India, who conceived their work in many ways as that of empire-building in the image of the Roman empire, where Roman law and order was implanted on all its territories as a self-styled act of bringing civilization to the barbarians, the crafts enthusiasts worked in the image of Britain as the legitimate

retainer of its territories. They derived their imagery from the Mughals who – as one of the earliest historians of Indian architecture, James Fergusson, for one, was convinced – embodied the highest achievements in the arts and crafts in Indian history.¹³ Some of this no doubt had simply to do with the fact that Islam as a religion was closely related to Christianity and was therefore more comprehensible and acceptable to him. But Fergusson made his argument on the ground that Mughal art and architecture was not only comprehensible – since it was spatial and orthogonal like that of Christendom – and thereby superior, but also because the Mughals were able to absorb the best of Hinduism, i.e. its craft, and integrate it into their higher aesthetic order. Similarly, the attempted sublimation of Hindu crafts into the superior European aesthetic was the operative logic of the crafts enthusiasts' promotion of the "Indo-Saracenic" architectural style that flowered in late Victorian India, not least in Swinton Jacob's own building designs.¹⁴

As the epigraph to the *Portfolio's* "Introduction," Jacob used a quotation by Fergusson on the lack of knowledge of the great tradition of Indian craftsmanship. Jacob hoped that the published drawings would "help those who may be called upon to design buildings in the future, and who wish to profit by the past." Going beyond Fergusson's plans and photographs, which had done much to "acquaint us with the general character," Jacob claimed that his drawings "would be easily accessible and of practical use to the architect and artisan." They could be used in two ways: first as "working drawings" for direct reproduction; and second as help to architects and artisans "either to adapt them to modern requirements, or from them to get inspiration for work in wood, or in metal, or in stone; or in plain or coloured surface decoration." In other words, Jacob hoped that the *Portfolio* would enable the local craftsmen not only to restore and revive traditional craft practices, but also to advance them, in an authentic manner unadulterated by Western influence, to meet modern requirements.

The precision enabled by architectural drafting was what allowed Jacob to make his claim.¹⁵ Jacob's emphasis on architectural drafting was not just as a useful skill. In the training of his new stratum of professionals, drafting as a methodology was crucial to the legitimacy of his operation. In the same way that photographs could enable the historian to compare and evaluate objects without personal field inspection, as James Fergusson had argued, Jacob maintained that drafting produced immaculate to-scale drawings of real buildings, enabling their comparison and reproduction. The difference between photographs and working drawings is that while the former only reproduce reality as the eye sees it, i.e. perspectively, the latter represents it orthographically. Since they are not perspectival but exactly to scale, working drawings, like the claims of a Cubist painting, could be said to be closer to reality than photographs since they are accurate representations.

Speaking to a gathering of RIBA architects on the occasion of an exhibition of the originals of the *Portfolio*, Jacob spoke of how the "sons of masons" who made the drawings "begin" drawing:

The drawings ... have been drawn entirely by natives of Jeypore – they are chiefly the sons of

masons who have had the advantages of training; these boys begin drawing when they can scarcely hold a pencil, and one may often see little fellows sitting by the side of their fathers, copying animals and flowers day by day, until they become very expert, and able themselves to do coloured decorations one sees on nearly all native houses.¹⁶

Why do these “expert” “sons of masons” who are “able themselves to do coloured decorations” need the “advantages of training”? Why must Jacob need to play stepfather to them? Who authorizes him, and why? As Thomas Hendley, curator of the Jeypore Museum of Science and Industry, a fellow crafts enthusiast and good friend of Jacob, argued, the “advantages of training” were that Jacob’s draftsmen could produce works which were “no longer copies but creations:”

For many years Colonel Jacob has employed a number of youths, trained in the first instance . . . at the Jeypore School of Art, in copying the ornament on the palaces, tombs and other important edifices at Delhi, Agra, or Futtehpoore Sikri, and at last his pupils, who, it should be observed were sons of Jeypore masons, *were so imbued with the spirit of the Indo-Saracenic style that they could produce works which were no longer copies but creations.*¹⁷

In this passage, the all-important distinction and mediation between a “copy” and a “creation” is enabled by the transcendental notion of “spirit.” “Creations” are “copies” that are imbued with “spirit.” The subtext of the argument is that mere “copies” are tied to the distinct cultural identities and differences they represent; “creations,” however, appeal to a higher, universal plane of appreciation. In the colonial economy, the native artisan’s movement from “copyist” to “creator,” enabled by the advantages of training, functions as a microcosmic legitimation of the Arts and Crafts ideals, as well as the benign pretensions of Empire.

In the ideology that underpinned the emerging Arts and Crafts movement, the creative act moved a work from being merely craft to being art. This is where – a prodigious distance from the actual hard labor of craftwork – we encounter the sleight of hand that turns the tables on the craftsman and makes him subservient to the Arts and Crafts theorist. For the crafts enthusiasts in India, though the traditional artisans had crafts, they did not possess true art. That was what the English brought to them.

John Ruskin, the high priest of the Victorian turn to Arts and Crafts sensibilities, articulated this polemic at its florid best. Speaking at the South Kensington Museum soon after the bloody events of the 1857 mutiny, Ruskin produced a scathing critique of Indian civilization itself. How was it, he asked, that a civilization that was capable of such beauty was capable of the horrors that had been inflicted on the (initially besieged but ultimately victorious) English troops. “Since the race of man began its course of sin on this earth,” Ruskin waxed eloquent, “nothing has ever been done but is so significative of all bestial, and lower than bestial degradation, as the acts of the Indian race in the year that has just passed.”¹⁸ For Ruskin the primary difficulty lay in finding a way to explain the presence of contradiction between the quality of the workmanship and the “bestial” nature of the race that produced it, where there should have been none. Symmetry between a civilization

and its arts was, after all, one of the hallmarks of the “South Kensington” ideology and later Arts and Crafts arguments.¹⁹ Approaching this “painful question ... as all good workmen should do, with clear heads, and calm consciences,” Ruskin concentrated his critique not only on the quality of the craftsmanship, but on the Indian *aesthetic*, and by extension, its philosophical and religious ethic. The Indian aesthetic was essentially corrupt, he condemned, because

*... it never represents a natural fact. It either forms its compositions out of meaningless fragments of colour and flowing of line; or if it represents any living creature, it represents that creature under some distorted and monstrous form*²⁰

For him the Hindu appropriation of the visual world as illusory, or *maya*, was responsible for this critical lack:

*... they have willfully sealed up and put aside the entire volume of the world, and have got nothing to read, nothing to dwell upon, but that imagination of the thoughts of their hearts, of which we are told that “it is only evil continually.” Over the whole spectacle of creation they have thrown a veil in which there is no rent*²¹

Without nature as a source, Ruskin contended, the Hindu craftsman thus practices an imitative art for art’s sake, which in his estimation was the root of destruction:

Wherever art is practiced for its own sake, and the delight of the workman is in what he *does* and *produces*, instead of what he *interprets* or *exhibits*, – there art has an influence of the most fatal kind on the brain and heart, and it issues, if long so pursued, in the *destruction both of intellectual power and moral principle*; whereas art, devoted humbly and self-forgetfully to the clear statement and record of the facts of the universe, is always helpful and beneficent to mankind, full of comfort, strength and salvation.²²

Finally, Ruskin concluded that if you once stop designing by interpreting nature

and set yourself to the designing of ornamentation, either in the ignorant play of your own fearless fancy, as the Indian does, or according to received application of heartless laws, as the modern European does, and there is but one world for you – Death: – death of every healthy faculty, and of every noble intelligence ...²³

As if turning a sock inside out, Ruskin here is turning the “South Kensington” stereotype of the Indian craftsman against himself, on the grounds that his forms are not derived from nature and are, further, simply reproductions of conventional rules and principles that exist for their own sake rather than creative interpretations of the mind. While the *prima facie* objective of Ruskin’s argument is to explain the cruelty of the Indian mutineers, the inversion of Ruskin’s argument enables him not only to reinstate and supplant, albeit altered, the “South Kensington” stereotype of India, but to do so in a manner that enables him once again to launch and reinforce his critique of English architecture and society and their use of the “received application of heartless laws.”

Similar inversions in reasoning can be discerned from Hendley's description of the preparatory process for the officially sanctioned wooden screens that were sent from Jaipur for the London Indo-Colonial Exhibition of 1886. These screens were meant to represent the Jaipur craftsmen, and the achievements of the decorative arts and crafts at their best, for the Western audience. Hendley, true to "South Kensington" ideals, describes the means of production, and not the specific formal qualities, of the screen to legitimize the selection:

... the general design [supplied by Jacob] is the modified Saracenic in vogue in Upper India and Rajputana. The only instructions issued to the woodcarvers have been that as great a variety of patterns was to be employed as possible; the ornament was to be purely Indian, and no attempt was to be made to work on other than the traditional lines. The men drew rough outlines with a pencil or even the graver, and each carver has done what was right in his own eyes, subject to the approval of the *mistris* or master-workmen, who had to judge whether the whole work would be in harmony or not.²⁴

In terms of patron–craftsmen relationship, it is possible to conceive the above as structured along lines that must be essentially similar to those that existed before colonization. Patronized by royalty or nobility, the craftsmen would have been expected to produce work in accordance with the desires of their patrons. In the colonial equation the workmen are the same, in the sense that they are drawn from the same sub-caste; only the interests of the patrons are different. Contradictorily, the craftsmen, in accordance with the desires of the patrons, are expected to work not for their patrons but for themselves. Their only "instructions" are that their designs are to be "varied ... purely Indian ... and traditional."

At one level the craftsmen can be interpreted as enjoying greater freedom, having been liberated from the limitation of the whims and vagaries of patronage. They are to do what is right in their own eyes. And what is right in their own eyes, in the eyes of the colonizers, is what will be "purely Indian." But what is "right," and how is the craftsman to ascertain that? What is "right" is also a matter of what is desirable, and what is desired by the patron. This can be understood in terms of the Freudian concept of "transference." According to Freud, "transference" is the process by which the unconscious desires of the analysand (here the craftsman) become real and are projected ("transferred") onto the analyst (here the colonial patron).²⁵ In any supposedly free exchange, transference is the structuring law. In a hegemonic situation – one that is supposedly free but is in fact unmistakably bracketed by a hierarchical situation such as that of the British patron and the native craftsman – transference must be expected to play a significant part in structuring their interactions. In the shadow of the stereotype, transference provides a model for understanding how identities were negotiated in the colonial economy. In other words, the subservient are always aware that there is a gap between the stated and desired intents of their superiors. What is desired by the patron is the "typically Indian." Dealing with an impossible stereotype, the craftsmen could not have had any clear conception of what that meant.²⁶ Propelled by their own desire to be up to the mark and unsure as to what exactly the patron wanted, the craftsmen of Jaipur,

I suggest, would have tried to second-guess their patrons by exceeding their traditional limits – by exceptional ornamentation and/or by “emulating the English workmen” as they thought best.

In practice, the crafts advocates’ perception of a real essence of craft was informed by their desire to project and produce the Indian craftsmen as authentic medieval craftsmen. By fetishizing accurate reproduction, Jacob’s drawings and Fergusson’s photographs displace and mask the stereotypical production of their enterprise by emphasizing the transparency of their methodology. This also served the more duplicitous function of displacing and masking the colonist’s own internalized complicity in the production of the stereotype.²⁷

Jacob put the *Portfolio* to use in all his buildings. However well-masked and displaced by a fetishized investment in methodology, the objectives of stereotyping are necessarily impossible. A stereotype is normative and unflexible, while people and their lives are always inevitably negotiated and in flux. While it certainly would have helped the discursive production of the stereotype as norm, the *Portfolio*’s practical application as a methodology for building, beyond the force of immediate authority, was bound to be undermined and dissipated.

In 1895 Jacob reported that, of the 500 copies printed of Parts I to VII, only 79 had been sold. A hundred and sixty-one were presented to friends of His Highness Sawai Madho Singh. The Maharaja also offered to present a set gratis to any public institution that “applied for a set bona fide for public use.”²⁸ But there were few takers. In 1929 the issue of the reprint of the *Portfolio* came up and the Superintending Engineer of Jaipur state turned down the idea, saying that the *Portfolio* was “now a museum record and nothing more.”²⁹

Meanwhile, in a report to evaluate the performance of the Jeypore School of Art, one Thakur of Geejgarh noted that, as a consequence of the *Portfolio*, the “architectural craftsmen” of Jaipur had become “copyists.” This, he felt, was because

[t]he thing seen, is copied by the older man exactly, because their training was to be exact. It is copied by the majority of younger craftsman [*sic*] with indifferent accuracy. In both cases the idea behind what is seen in the object copied, is lost sight of, why? [*sic*] Because the work is being done for a self satisfied public, content that the Jaipur designs are the best and not alive to the deterioration creeping in.³⁰

A self-satisfied public that has internalized the fantasy of a glorious stereotype is very likely to ignore or overlook deterioration in quality, as it is likely to resist development and transformation in style. The “copied” products of the “younger” craftsmen sold simply as certified and recognized derivatives of the normative stereotype, and were in that sense victims of the logic of stereotyping that requires the incessant reproduction of the same in its own image. Their primary customers, not surprisingly, were the tourists who came, and still come, to Jaipur to “experience” the stereotype.

Chapter 7: Institutional Audiences and Architectural Style

The Napier Museum

Paul Walker

INTRODUCTION

Who were the audiences of colonial architecture? Who were the audiences of public institutions such as museums in the colonial context? How were such institutions received by their audiences? In this chapter, these questions motivate an examination of the Napier Museum in Trivandrum, designed from 1872 by Robert Fellowes Chisholm – consulting architect to the Government of Madras – for the nominally independent princely state of Travancore (Figure 7.1).

It is not easy to answer these questions about audience. First, there is little useful archival evidence. There are some bald statistics: numbers of visitors to museums, categorized by sex and by whether or not they could sign their name.¹ The figures suggest that the majority of the visitors to museums in India in the nineteenth century were illiterate. But even those who did read and write probably left



Figure 7.1
Napier Museum,
Trivandrum.

no diaries, no letters, no memoirs, as they did not participate in European rituals of literacy. Secondly, contemporary postcolonial theory may give us little help in understanding the condition of colonial architecture in places such as India. Mark Crinson, in his introduction to his 1996 book *Building Empire*, concurs with Edward Said that imperialism is central to the formation of modernity, and that culture and the cultivation of sensibility are themselves part of imperialism. But Crinson suggests that Said has little to offer in helping us understand encounters with the geographically displaced architectural objects European powers left scattered through Asia and the Middle East, for these took place in the colonial context itself, rather than in the centers of metropolitan Europe where orientalist paintings, books, music and decorative arts found their addressees.² Chisholm, a successful and competent British architect who spent most of his productive career in India, designed buildings that were largely occupied, visited and beheld by Indians. We should, however, not assume that the lives of these Indian addressees were autonomously “other,” for they were being remade by the exigencies of Empire.³

STYLE AND CRAFT IN CHISHOLM'S ARCHITECTURE

There is another place to start examining colonial architecture's audiences: style. The conventional matter of architectural style may not seem a promising point of departure. But if invoked through a question that was compelling in nineteenth-century architectural culture – “In what style should we build?” – the issue of audience follows on, for one way of answering this question was in terms of architecture's reception. This was at stake for Chisholm in his decision to design the Napier Museum in what he called the “native style” of the Malabar coast, drawing on buildings he saw during a visit in 1872 to Trivandrum and the old Travancore capital of Padmanabhapuram (Figure 7.2). He explained this choice in a text he presented to the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1873, in which he identified the telling attributes of Travancore architecture: stacked roofs of timber and tile construction to protect walls and openings below from tropical rain; dormers in the roofs, and railed brackets under roof eaves to facilitate ventilation; and so on.⁴ The report was illustrated with sketches emphasizing such features. Chisholm considered connections between this architecture and “Hindoo” and “Mahommedan” forms, but it emerges from his descriptions as a robust style in its own right. Critical both of the Classical and the Gothic that had been used in recent public buildings in Trivandrum, Chisholm wrote that for an imported architecture to be accepted, it must be adapted to the climate and to the “requirements of the people;” it must be “capable of expression in local materials;” and it must “present surfaces and forms for elaboration, which the people have been in the habit of rendering ornate.” It was because these conditions could not be met with European styles in Travancore that Chisholm attempted to adopt the local idiom. He described his design for the Napier Museum thus:

In the general plan and arrangement I have rigidly adhered to symmetry [*sic*] as a leading char-

acteristic of all Native Art. I have endeavoured to catch the feeling of crossing roof with roof at right angles and differing spans

So far, I would control the building of the Museum, but in all else, in finishing, in elaboration, and in ornamentation, I would leave the native artisan entirely unfettered. The materials would be simple and substantial. Laterite unplastered with plain stone dressings, I would make a free use of wood in all suitable positions, regarding this for the present as the only field for the display of Art, as I consider that under existing circumstances, by wood carving alone can a structure on this Coast, be raised from mere building to the dignity of architecture.⁵

Chisholm's comments draw on the Ruskinian view of building craft and the craftsman's role in the enlivening transformation of a design through its built realization. This is a conception of the role of craft that has its origins in the "Lamp of Life" chapter of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and the "Nature of Gothic" chapter of *The Stones of Venice* (1851–3).⁶

It may be useful here to consider how similar architectural ideals were played out in a museum building from the same period, but in a very different colonial context, that of the neo-European settler society of New Zealand. New Zealand museums like Indian ones faced the problem of the relationship with the local in their architecture and in their collections. But it was played out differently in each context. New Zealand was a settler society with ongoing anxieties about its own identity and about its relationship with a Britain that showed little interest in it. The colony of Canterbury in New Zealand's cool and temperate South Island was developed under the authority of the New Zealand Company from 1850, with the intention to be a virtual slice of England. Indigenous Maori people had no presence in the colony's principal town of Christchurch. Institutions as they developed there had the general role of reproducing a semblance of the metropolitan culture that British migrants had left behind. The Canterbury Museum was one of these. Its



Figure 7.2
Royal Palace,
Padmanabhapuram,
eighteenth century.

collections – which, as at Trivandrum, presented natural history and ethnology – began to be assembled in the 1860s, but, unlike those in Trivandrum, they were always intended to be systematic general collections, not just local. From 1870 to 1882 a permanent home for these collections was built in stages to the designs of the architect Benjamin Woolfield Mountfort (Figure 7.3). Like Chisholm, Mountfort was influenced by Ruskin. He owned photographs of Deane and Woodward's Oxford Museum, a building project in which Ruskin had been heavily involved and

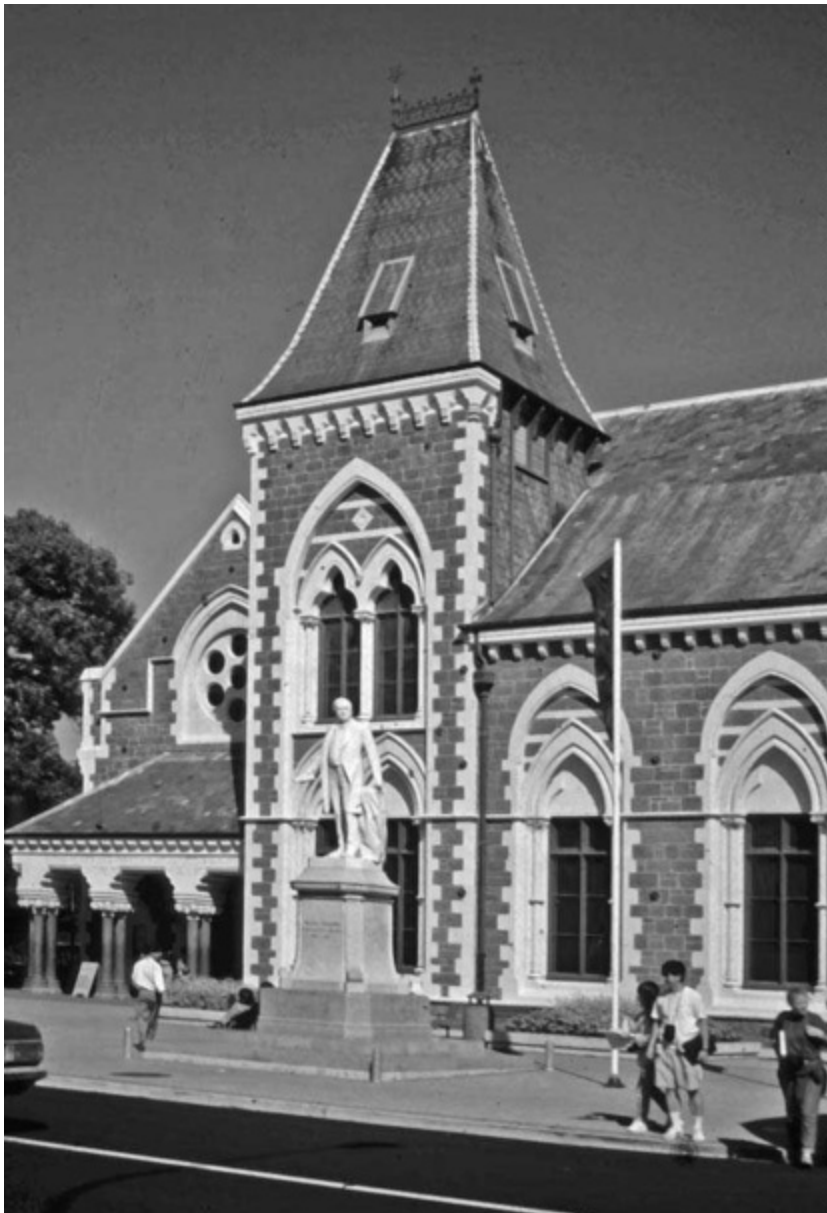


Figure 7.3
Canterbury Museum,
Christchurch, New
Zealand.

in which his principles were put into practice.⁷ Indeed, one of Mountfort's Oxford Museum photographs was exhibited at the opening of the first wing of the Canterbury Museum. Again like Chisholm, Mountfort was particularly influenced by Ruskin's conception of the relation of architect and craftsman: the masons who worked on Mountfort's building were allowed "free range" when carving window decorations and capitals. In an 1878 critique of the design of the museum portico, the Christchurch newspaper *The Press* – which had previously reported on other local buildings, including some by Mountfort, in terms evoking Ruskin – described the decorative elements as "... an artistic mingling of foliage and animals' heads carried out in the Gothic style, the general effect being emblematical of the Museum Mr Smith does his work unaided by any pictorial design, and undoubtedly exhibits high artistic culture."⁸

In the context of a settler colony, this inventiveness was not to be extended as it was in India to the indigenous population. When in 1874 two Maori carvers were employed by the Canterbury Museum to work on the large meeting house Hau-Te-Ananui-o-Tangiroa that it had acquired in a partially damaged state, a local controversy emerged about the work they undertook. Like the house, the carvers were from the Ngati Porou tribal area on the east coast of the North Island. Ngati Porou houses were notable for the integration of non-traditional elements and techniques, and in particular painted images of plants and other motifs.⁹ A description of the completed house, read to the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury in 1875, expressed disappointment that the carvers worked in this manner: "The artist unfortunately did not confine himself to ancient patterns, but introduced various novelties of his own designing, consisting for the most part of representations of the leaves of different plants and shrubs."¹⁰ This, it was believed, entailed a loss of authenticity. But could paintings such as these have been so far, say, from Mr Smith's carvings on the portico of the museum? The responsibility and inventiveness argued for the worker by Ruskin, and argued by *The Press* for Christchurch's masons, was denied to these colonized subjects. Maori – it was assumed – would disappear or be assimilated into the expanding European population so that their culture would become extinct: artifacts such as Hau-Te-Ananui-o-Tangiroa should not incorporate novelty because they were to stand in the museum for a culture assigned to an unchanging past.¹¹

The concern with craft and Indian industry motivated Chisholm throughout his career. For this reason he became closely involved with the Madras School of Arts during his tenure as Consulting Architect to the Government of Madras. Chisholm was placed temporarily in control of this school in 1876–7, and carried out this role conjointly with his responsibilities as consulting architect.¹² Chisholm recounted his ambitions for the school in an article, "Indian Industrial Development," published much later in his career in the *Journal of the East India Association* in July 1909.¹³ This was a response to a previous article in the *Journal* that proposed a network of engineering colleges and a thousand well-equipped high schools to facilitate India's industrial development. Chisholm criticized both the expense and impossibility of staffing such a scheme. In its stead he proposed a

thousand "schools of industrial art," outlining his experience with the Madras School of Arts as an example of what could be accomplished towards the same objectives but at much less expense.

Chisholm described how the School of Arts operated in conjunction with the consulting architect's office during his tenure: "In this way the school became the architect's workshop, and the materials and articles indented for and supplied by the school were paid for out of the sanctioned estimates for public buildings." The pedagogical program of the school was in two parts – mornings were spent in "educational" activities, while during the afternoons students worked on "industrial" projects as apprentices "at the various handicrafts going forward at the time." He considered drawing as fundamental to this arrangement; the drawing teachers responsible for education would be English, the industrial teachers "native artisans only."¹⁴

How can we interpret this? Did it imply an industrial future for India based on its own technological base, but as defined by an Englishman? Does it continually return the "native" to what the colonizer considers the native's own? A condition subordinated to colonial interests?

Before running the Madras School of Arts, Chisholm had already had occasion to think about education in relation to architecture. In 1869 he made a proposal that the University of Madras establish a chair in architecture, implicitly projecting a receptive audience for architecture within the local community. He noted in this regard a particular duty to the "natives" by which the British colonizers would ultimately be judged:

All the art with which this country has teemed still lies dormant among the people; it is scattered, perhaps, but recognizable in the carved wood lintel or plaster temple in villages remote from civilization; but have we not, the conquerors, scattered it? Have we not, like all conquering nations, robbed the people of the architectural art they once possessed; but have we, like all conquering nations, given them anything in exchange? Have we engrafted any art on to theirs? There is hardly a work in the country which expresses the least sympathy between the conquerors and the conquered, – scarcely a structure which will enable future ethnologists to place us in the scale of civilization above the level of barbarians.¹⁵

Chisholm went on to lament the importing into India – like beer and hats – of architectural styles fashionable in England, and noted that the Classical orders which had "defaced every modern structure" in India were about to be followed by a Gothic invasion. While decrying the thoughtless adoption of Gothic forms and elements, he acknowledged Gothic principles "to be the only true principles of architecture for all countries."

Despite Chisholm's arguments, the proposal was defeated. It is unlikely that Chisholm actually intended the proposed professor of architecture to educate local builders and artisans directly about the principles of Gothic and thereby lead them to an application in the local context with local materials. Rather, Chisholm envisaged that, by promoting knowledge of architectural principles and by advising the government on its own buildings, such a professor would influence

the production of buildings that themselves would embody concrete lessons in architecture.

Chisholm was clearly attuned to this didactic function of architecture in his primary agency as Consulting Architect to the Government of Madras. It was not uncommon, for example, for the government's annual reports to include accounts of public architecture – Chisholm's domain – under the chapter heading "Instruction." Significantly, it was under this heading that the activities of the Government Central Museum were also reported.¹⁶ Architecture was first identified as a matter of instruction in the report 1875/6, in which the work of the consulting architect was described:

With a view to the improvement of architectural and structural design in Government buildings, the Madras Government have for some years entertained a Consulting Architect, to whom all projects for important buildings are sent, and from whom designs for various purposes are called for. The main objects kept in view by the Consulting Architect's Department are a comprehensive consideration of the capabilities of the various materials, the suppression of ornament serving no useful end, the careful arrangement of apartments with a view to economy, the thoughtful distribution of parts and masses to avoid ugliness, and the development of ideas and forms suitable to the climate and country.

The text goes on to name key public buildings recently constructed, and important restoration and "adaptation" work undertaken at various old palaces including those at Madura. "With the exception of the Presidency College, Madras, and the Lawrence Asylum, Ootacamund, the whole of these buildings have been constructed in oriental styles with oriental ornamentation"¹⁷

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: AUDIENCES AND LOCATION

Why should the Lawrence Asylum and the Presidency College, both realized in the Italianate style then fashionable in England, be exceptions to the predominance of "oriental styles with oriental ornamentation"?

In the years immediately after his arrival in Madras in 1865, Chisholm's thinking about architecture, and indigenous architectural styles in particular, evidently evolved under the influence of the presiding Governor of Madras (1866–72), Lord Napier and Etterick – the namesake of the museum that Chisholm subsequently designed for Trivandrum. Chisholm had come to Madras after winning a competition for the designs of the Senate House at Madras University and the Presidency College.¹⁸ Among the first of his designs to be constructed in Madras, Chisholm's buildings for the predominantly Indian pupils of the Presidency College gave little indication of his subsequent thinking about the relationship of a building's style to the constituency of those who used or viewed it. The Senate House – assigned to the list of "oriental buildings" in the report cited above, and sometimes referred to as Byzantine in style – was not built until some years after Chisholm's arrival in Madras, and may not be to his first competition-winning design (Figure 7.4).¹⁹ The anomaly of the Lawrence Asylum's Italianate style has a different



Figure 7.4
Senate House,
Madras University.

rationale: this building was for the children of British army personnel. The community it served was European, so hence its architecture should be as well.

This link between different styles and different communities or constituencies was made explicit by Napier in a lecture published in the influential British journal *The Builder* in 1870 under the title "Modern Architecture in India."²⁰ Napier lamented the condition of architecture both in India and in England. Through the

influence of historical scholarship that turned buildings into specimens, English architecture had become undesirably eclectic. He advocated instead a return to the Gothic; ancient, natural to the English, and – adapted to modern purposes – able to produce something quite “harmonious.” But such harmony could not be expected in India, long occupied by two peoples and with a third “recently arrived.”²¹

Napier’s arguments about the architecture of India were developed in several ways, each articulating the architectural concerns, in his view, of particular constituencies within the subcontinent’s complex of different peoples. Napier considered various “native” communities in the first instance. When building for their own purposes, they should value their own traditions, he argued, even where innovation was necessary. He criticized the way some native states had made buildings for themselves in inappropriate styles. The government offices at Trivandrum, for example, built in a Classical style, could instead have united local materials and local architectural traditions, with “the expansions and modifications necessary for the convenience of civilized administration” Napier’s criticism of the use of Classicism in Trivandrum was repeated – as we have seen – in Chisholm’s 1873 text explaining his choice of “Malabar coast style” for the Trivandrum museum.

Considering the question of modern architecture in India from the point of view of its colonial European constituency, there was in Napier’s view little to commend Gothic churches in particular. He suggested that a more appropriate style for Europeans in India would be the Byzantine, a reconciliation between Europe and Asia, distinct from the rest of Indian architecture and yet in keeping with “one capital section of the ancient monuments of the country.”²²

The question of an architecture suitable for the government of India required a further approach, in Napier’s view, distinct from either “Indian” or “European” concerns, yet implicitly required to be pertinent to all its peoples. The so-called “Saracenic” architecture of the former Mughal Empire was Napier’s answer. Like other Victorian commentators, Napier believed this architecture to have Roman origins which gave it historical significance to the Europeans who now administered India, while its history in India itself made it locally relevant. In his estimation, “Saracenic” was both beautiful and scientific, requiring little adornment but being able to take much, suitable for “all the diversified requirements of modern social life,” and adaptable to modern iron construction. Of the forms of this architecture, he reassured his metropolitan readers, “[v]ery little study would render them familiar to the English and the native builders.”

Napier cited Chisholm’s Revenue Board offices at Madras (Figure 7.5) as a seminal exemplar of this third approach: “... the first tribute to the genius of the past; ... the first example of a revival in native art, which, I hope, will not remain unappreciated and unfruitful.”²³ It is noteworthy, however, that this was not entirely a newly designed building. Rather, it was fashioned out of a part of the eighteenth-century Chepauk Palace, the former city residence of the recently deposed Muslim princes of Arcot, which had been designed in a more amateurish Saracenic manner a century earlier, most probably by another Englishman, Paul Benfield, in the service of the Arcot prince.²⁴ Moreover, the use of an architecture



Figure 7.5
Revenue Board offices,
Madras.

arguably of Mughal origins was of doubtful pertinence to the local Tamil population of Madras, which was never subject to the direct rule of the Islamic dynasties of north India. From the point of view of the Governor, however, the official buildings of the presidency town of Madras, like those of its rivals Calcutta and Bombay, had an importance and role in serving and representing British India that went well beyond its immediate territory and population. As Thomas Metcalf has argued, beginning with Chisholm's work, British Indian architecture was particularly concerned with Islamic architecture in India, not only for the reasons Napier identified – its rationality, adaptability, putatively Western origins and local history – but also because this architecture was that of another conquering power with which the British could identify.²⁵

While Napier saw his propositions for an appropriate civic architecture for India realized in Chisholm's Revenue Board, Napier's influence on Chisholm was most telling not there, in Madras, but rather in a building of an altogether different style, the Napier Museum in Trivandrum (Figure 7.6). Here Chisholm's perception of the Malabar coast architecture he saw on his 1872 trip to Travancore was filtered through the frame of Napier's architectural theory. Returning the compliment Napier had three years earlier paid him, Chisholm wrote in his Trivandrum report: "These ideas and the expressed views of the accomplished Nobleman whose name is to be honored by the construction of this building, have led me to adopt the design you see before you" When Chisholm's design arrived in Trivandrum, it was recommended by the British Resident in Travancore, G. A. Ballard, that Napier's views be sought on the design.²⁶ As a later Resident's report on the nearly completed building confirmed, the new museum had indeed been designed "... to give effect to the views expressed by Lord Napier as to the desirability of preserving as much as possible of the most meritorious features of the old native style of



Figure 7.6
Napier Museum.

architecture, and promises to be one of the handsomest buildings erected in modern times in Southern India."²⁷

The Napier Museum was the beginning of a line of development in Chisholm's work that saw references to Travancore style appearing elsewhere in the geographical spread of his designs. This occurs in at least two further key works: the Madras Post and Telegraph building of the early 1880s, and the Baroda Museum of the late 1880s (Figure 7.7). Metcalf has noted the strong connections between the museum building at Trivandrum and the Post building as evidence that

Chisholm did not hold to a narrowly regionalist conception of the utility and applicability of indigenous architectural styles.²⁸ Certainly the Post and Telegraph building was seen as an exemplar of “local” architecture by Chisholm himself. The annual report from his office for 1880–1 noted: “Nearly all the details are careful adaptations of Eastern forms and principles, and, with the exception of the pot metal glass from England and teakwood from Burmah, the whole building will be evolved from local materials and labor.”²⁹

“With the construction of the Madras Post Office,” asserts Metcalf, “Indo-Saracenic architecture – with its self-assured mastery of Indic detail and its mingling of elements from across India – took on a mature form.”³⁰ But this building is very far from the Indo-Saracenic mode that Napier had in mind as suitable for British building in India, and which he saw Chisholm establishing at the nearby Revenue Offices. It is also quite far from the rest of the Indo-Saracenic movement that Metcalf and others have discussed.³¹

The Madras pair of the Post and Telegraph (more Travancore in style than Saracenic) and Revenue offices (tending to British Indo-Saracenic orthodoxy) was repeated by Chisholm in the Baroda pair of museum (Travancore) and Baroda College (Saracenic) (Figure 7.8).³²

What can we make of this range within Chisholm’s Indian styles and the question of geographical dislocation it entails? Chisholm himself did not see his Post building deriving only from Travancore precedents. Late in his life he described the style as “... a west coast phase of native work, which I think most suitable for the climate. Every feature here seen will be found somewhere on the west coast between Ahmedabad in Guzerat and Trevandrum in Travancore.”³³ This seems to give a warrant to his work at Baroda, but not to the Madras building, where a problem of dislocation remains.

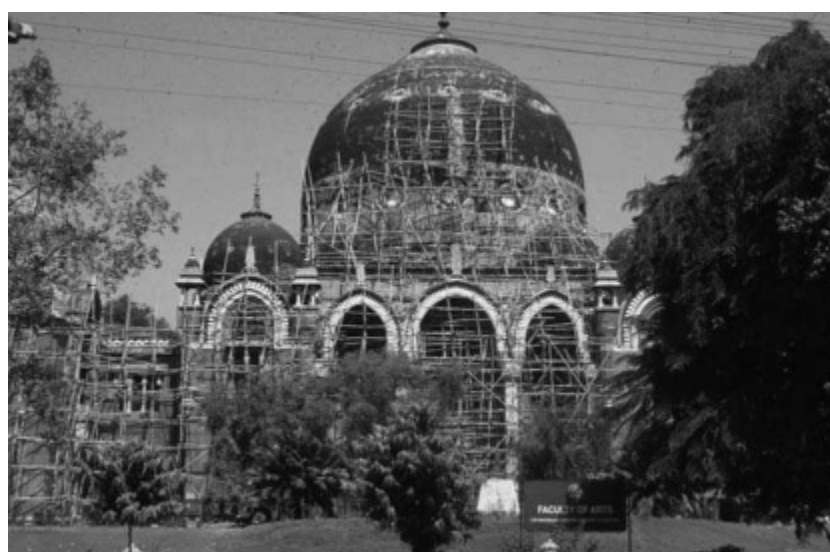
Interestingly, the Napier Museum building in Trivandrum has become a much-loved and well-kept local landmark. By comparison, the Post and Telegraph building in Madras is a shambles, hemmed in by ad-hoc additions, with the steep pitched roofs lost from its central towers (Figure 7.9). Is this because stylistically it cannot be read by a Tamil audience increasingly aware of its cultural distinction from a generic Indian one? In the most recent, 1996, edition of *Sir Banister Fletcher’s A History of Architecture*, Sri Lankan scholar Dr Roland Silva describes the Post and Telegraph as an exemplification of Chisholm’s use of the Gothic.³⁴ In his text on the Napier Museum design, Chisholm himself comments on the similarity of the gateways of Travancore houses to “certain phases of gothic.”³⁵ Add to this Metcalf’s view that the Travancore Maharajah had wanted a Gothic design from Chisholm for his museum, and was displeased when the architect provided something else, and we move into a dizzying circle of stylistic miscegenation that no longer allows the clear correspondence with discrete communities as described by Napier.³⁶

The very different states of maintenance of the Napier Museum building and the Madras Post and Telegraph today tell us something about cultural politics in postcolonial India but nothing that helps us apprehend Chisholm and his particular

Figure 7.7
Baroda Museum.



Figure 7.8
Baroda College, now
Maharaja Sayajirao
University of Baroda.



Institutional Frameworks ■

colonial-modern context. An explanation may be found, however, by returning to the relationship of architecture to craft, architect to artisan, to the subject who builds – the colonial subject – and coupling this with Chisholm's belief in the role of public buildings as instructive exemplars. Chisholm, recall, chose to build in a local style at Trivandrum because, unlike "foreign styles," it was suited to the climate and "the requirements of the people," could be achieved in local materials, and offered opportunities for ornamentation. The building was conceptually realized as a collaboration of his own design and – "in finishing, in elaboration, and in ornamentation" – the "unfettered" "native artisan." Again I would note echoes of Ruskin's Lamp of Life here. But perhaps another of the Lamps is also pertinent, the Lamp of Obedience.³⁷ This entailed the principle that, crudely put, if designers were not sure how to proceed, they should take up the discipline of an existing style. Ruskin nominated several strains of Gothic he thought suitable for nineteenth-century England. Perhaps for Chisholm, Travancore offered the discipline of a style that could be taken up just as well as the emerging conventions of the Indo-Saracenic style. Its roof construction was certainly more straightforward than the domes often entailed in the latter; for example, at Baroda College. The dome there is the subject of a lengthy technical disquisition by Chisholm published in the *RIBA Journal* in 1882.³⁸ Did a general absence of suitably qualified artisans and craftsmen make such clarifying of technical procedure necessary? We could postulate from this that Chisholm's Indian styles – Travancore or Indo-Saracenic – did not address clearly defined local audiences after all: each style projected an audience. This projected audience was conceptualized as in partnership with the architect in the

Figure 7.9
Post and Telegraph
Building, Madras, current
condition. The central
towers have lost their
steep roofs, which were
similar to those on the
end pavilions.



delivery of the building's style. It brought forth a response to the question, "In what style should we build?," but was not conceptualized as having a role in another more fundamental question: "What should we build?"

THE MUSEUM "GONE NATIVE"

The logic of the building as exemplar implies a projected audience. The counter-question is: what do the audiences of public institutions such as museums project into their architecture? What implications does this have for the style of such buildings? What implications might this have for the changing ways these buildings may be seen in their cultural contexts?

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, because of limitations in literacy it is difficult to know what visitors to Indian museums in the nineteenth century thought of their experiences. Visitor numbers were recorded for the museums mentioned here, and broken down in various ways: by month, gender, whether they signed the visitor's book. There are no doubt patterns to discern in these figures. The Government Central Museum in Madras analyzed visitor signatures by language: English, Tamil, Telugu, "Hindustani," etc.³⁹ These index the complexity of communities – irreducible to "European" and "native" – that made up colonial India. From 1879, at "the request of numerous Mahomedan gentlemen," the Madras museum maintained specific periods when only "gosha [Muslim] ladies" could attend. But subsequent museum reports repeatedly comment on how few availed themselves of this opportunity.⁴⁰ Could we suspect that opportunities for members of a particular community to attend the museum were not at stake here so much as a claim by that community on the public or symbolic resource the museum represented?

Numbers recorded for the museum at Trivandrum suggest another kind of audience pattern. They substantially increased in 1880 when Chisholm's building was finally opened to the public. The *Report on the Administration of Travancore* for 1880–1 shows that in the first full year of the museum's operations in the new building there were 110,071 visitors, compared with 89,897 in 1874–5 (the last year with which a clear comparison can be made). After that, visitor numbers increased quickly, reaching 189,276 in 1885–6.

The building was presumably acting as an attractor. But we still do not know what visitors *thought* in any detail. It is not possible to reconstruct any *specific* reactions to the Napier Museum. We can, however, consider some general postulates. Gyan Prakash uses the term "science gone native" to refer to certain kinds of agency that appeared among Indian audiences of nineteenth-century science. It was the obverse of British attempts to give historical legitimacy to their authority in India by using local architectural forms: "architecture gone native." Prakash's argument is that "native" objects were used in museum and exhibition settings with the intent that – suitably organized – they would speak "science", and thereby the authority of the West: "the representation of science as Western was expected to emerge from the placement of 'native' objects before 'native' eyes"⁴¹ Such

eyes, it is important to recall, could usually not read the texts with which museums typically reinforce their expository role through guides, catalogs, and descriptive texts.⁴²

The placement of “native” objects before “native” eyes aptly describes the curatorial strategies followed at Trivandrum after the museum moved to Chisholm’s building. Earlier acquisitions for the museum collection had included industrial models such as “a useful portable steam engine of one-horse power, to consume wood.”⁴³ But as the new building was being constructed, it was decided to exclude such things.⁴⁴ Although visitors to the Napier Museum were mostly illiterate, there was an ordering of exhibits driven by categories that were probably clearer on paper than when realized through the spatial disposition of objects.⁴⁵ In any case, systematicity had constantly to be reasserted. After 1880, when the museum was in its new premises, the development of collections was directed by one H. S. Fergusson – a member of the museum committee – who “... organized a useful and systematic series of indigenous exhibits out of a disorderly heap of odds and ends which formed the Museum collections then.”⁴⁶ Assuming direct charge of the museum in 1894, Fergusson

... concentrated his attention to confining rigorously the collections to the illustration of the Natural History, Arts, Crafts, Manners and Customs of Travancore ... and at the time of his retirement in 1904, he had brought the Museum to a level of such excellence as to make it probably one of the best in all India.⁴⁷

The Report on the Museum for 1903–4 noted that a “heterogeneous collection of odds and ends” – specimens of “foreign art” – had been auctioned off in the course of the year. But in 1933 another change of direction was recorded. A “Foreign Section” was reestablished when the museum was presented with a Roman lamp brought back from Europe by a member of the Maharajah’s family. This souvenir from Italy – an ironic reversal of the tradition of Western museums and tourists “sacking” the East – was followed in 1937 by a collection of objects the then Maharajah and Maharani brought back from Bali and Java.⁴⁸ These can still be seen in the Napier Museum today.

Prakash applies his argument about “science gone native” to two modes of agency found in Indian audiences. One was that of an educated elite who extracted from the “exhibitionary” complex an opportunity to form an identity in relation to the subaltern: “enlightened unlike the subaltern but colonized like it.” The other was that of the subaltern who “improperly” used the museum as an amusement, or “misinterpreted” and then spread misinformation about agricultural exhibitions, for example, that colonial rulers intended as educational.⁴⁹ The experience with the “gosha lady” visitor days at the Government Central Museum in Madras suggests another kind of “native” group asserted a claim on the museum unconnected with its ostensible aims. And the development of the museum collections at Trivandrum strongly suggests yet another “native” group that Prakash does not mention who also exercised certain modes of agency in relation to Indian museums. These were the aristocrats in the “native states” such as Travancore and Baroda. It was in such

states that funding for museums was most readily available.⁵⁰ Their leaders had to demonstrate constantly to the British that they exercised their authority to promote the public good. Expenditure on museums and other such civic institutions was one way of doing this. It is notable that Sir T. Madhava Rao, first Dewan (principal advisor and bureaucrat) of the reforming and institution-building Travancore Maharajah who commissioned the Napier Museum building, was in charge of the government of Baroda (effectively regent to that state's Maharajah) when Chisholm was asked to design the college there in 1882.⁵¹ This presumably led to his later appointment with the state service, and to the design of the Baroda museum. But if demonstrating good governance by expenditure on institutions like museums was in part a way of maintaining princely power, museum administration could not always be separated from other manifestations of such authority. The heterogeneity of collections in these museums was caused through an intrusion into the museum's internal order of a local power that had sponsored it for its own purposes and did not care for its petty concern with the maintenance of consistency.

By the 1930s, this heterogeneity had become deeply entrenched in the Napier Museum. It became particularly apparent in 1936, when the museum was inspected in the course of the Empire Survey of Museums, undertaken between 1928 and 1937 by the Museums Association of Great Britain, of the museums of the United Kingdom and the British Empire. The description of the museum in the directory of Indian museums published after the survey suggests an ordered layout of collections: ethnology and art at the middle, and the various departments of natural history in the building's peripheral spaces. But the visual experience of a museum visitor – even a literate one – did not reflect this sense of order. The very critical survey report published with the directory focused its comments on the extreme overcrowding of collections in the Napier Museum. The survey suggested – in the words of the museum's own annual report – "... that the Museum is defeating its object in huddling up all the exhibits in a higgledy piggledy manner."⁵² How had the presentation of collections at the Napier Museum changed from "a disorderly heap of odds and ends" to "a useful and systematic series of indigenous exhibits" in the Fergusson period, and then back to a "higgledy piggledy" huddle in the thirty years following? No doubt this reflected changing perceptions of what good display practice was: the "system" of 1900 might look like "huddle" in 1936. But it was also symptomatic of a growing loss of purpose.

The Survey found Indian museums were very poor in resources, and faced the particular issue of illiteracy among their visitors. But New Zealand museums for example – while better funded – had also lost their sense of mission. At Trivandrum, the introduction of "foreign" objects by the Maharajah and his family disrupted its scientifically ordered collections of the "local," yet ironically thereby made the museum more the "native's" own. (This could be seen as the inverse of Chisholm's adaptation of local architecture for imperial ends.) At the Canterbury Museum, the case was different: the local was a disruption of the foreign, or at least of the general. The major innovation in collection policy that occurred after the death of the foundation director Julius von Haast in 1887 was the decision to collect material

pertinent to a purely local history: of the European settlement of Canterbury.⁵³ Such artifacts were first housed along with Maori ethnological material in Hau-Te-Ananui-o-Tangiroa, which had been fitted out as an exhibition space.⁵⁴ It is not clear whether motivation for this change in collection policy came from within the museum or, as at Trivandrum, from the external pressure of sponsoring authorities.

The Empire Survey of Museums motivated the establishment of a discursive environment in which developments in Indian museology proceeded in the following decade and beyond as independence was anticipated and achieved.⁵⁵ At the Napier Museum, however, changes were catalyzed in a very concrete manner. The desirability of expansion had been identified well before the Survey, but it only came afterwards.⁵⁶ The overcrowding that the Survey noted was in fact countered *immediately* after its visit: a library hall near Chisholm's building was annexed to house the ethnological and geological collections.⁵⁷ The extra space in the main building

... was utilised for the better display of the collections of art and handicrafts consisting of bronzes, stone and wooden images, metal lamps, jewellery, ivory articles and musical instruments. ... The walls of the Museum were repainted in a cream colour. As the alternating vertical stripes of brick red and blue on the walls did not harmonise with the present collection of bronze and stone exhibits, cream was used throughout with gratifying results. The original stripes have been left undisturbed in the two end halls, devoted to miscellaneous objects.⁵⁸

The modernity of the thin, neutral paint skin had arrived in Trivandrum (Figure 7.10). The much-loved stripy eccentricity of Chisholm's building was now too intrusive to serve as anything but the backdrop of "miscellaneous objects." The natural history collections would have to wait some time to get a new building of their own. It was to be like the photograph of the new natural history gallery at the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay published in the Survey's report, *The Museums of India*: orderly dioramas and mounted specimens in cases set flush with smooth, light-colored wall surfaces.⁵⁹

The Empire Survey was instrumental in assisting local ambitions to become modern. Modernization at Canterbury had also to deal with the building accommodation and how it looked. The Survey had praised the Canterbury collections, but noted that they were crowded and that the museum had lost impetus and was underfunded. But in particular it was critical of the buildings.⁶⁰ While the museum's street frontage was noted as having "architectural features of special interest" and to be "itself a Museum specimen," the oldest part of the building was identified as requiring demolition. The museum's curator noted in his annual report of 1933/4 that, during his visit, S. F. Markham of the Empire Survey had in fact discouragingly suggested that most of the museum should be pulled down and rebuilt.⁶¹

The Survey's comments served to support expansionist and modernizing arguments that successive curators and directors at Canterbury had promoted since the turn of the century.⁶² Initiatives that would finally lead to the building of a new wing began in 1944, when the museum proposed that a major extension should be built to mark the centenary of the British settlement of Canterbury



Figure 7.10
Napier Museum, current
interior condition.

province in 1850. Expansion and renovation were not complete till 1958. When the museum reopened, Hau-Te-Ananui-o-Tangiroa had been dismantled, and most traces of the museum's Victorian interiors had disappeared behind homogeneous pale pastel walls and ceilings. The exception was the original portion of the building. Not demolished, it was now occupied by an ersatz Victorian Christchurch street. New Zealand identity was now to be found in a putative pioneer past. The

new part of the museum's extended front facade veiled its meager modernist order behind elements copied from Mountfort's original.

"Identity" had at Canterbury become a thin veneer over the instrumental surfaces of modernity. At Trivandrum, modernity was a paint skin over nineteenth-century attempts to deploy difference to imperial ends.

CONCLUSION

Chisholm conceived the relationship of architect and craftsman as a productive partnership of design and execution. This was derived from the theories of the mid-nineteenth-century Gothic revival, and Chisholm avowedly remained committed to these merits of Gothic throughout his career. But colonial contexts inflected Gothic revival theory in various ways. The design approaches Chisholm used came to reflect his views of what contemporary Indian builders could achieve from their own craft base and the styles in which this was embedded. From this, Chisholm on the one hand developed an interest in practical aspects of education in applied arts and manufacturing. On the other, he came to view public buildings as exemplars that embodied architectural lessons for those who encountered them. Following Lord Napier, Chisholm understood that the constituencies to which the architecture of public buildings was addressed in India were multiple. This warranted a range of stylistic approaches, with each style projecting different communities and different competencies.

But the ways in which audiences for institutions such as museums asserted their own interests suggest something more complex and evasive. In the Napier Museum, this produced a certain disorderliness in collection and exhibition practices. Despite the specificity of their different cultural circumstances, by the 1930s similar disorder was found throughout museums in the British colonial world. The modern architectural gestures with which this was confronted were also similar. In this convergence, changes in the conceptual framework of the museum coincide with a loss of confidence in the efficacy of architectural style. Where does this leave the issue of the audience with regard to the institution of the museum and its architecture?

The kinds of architectural interventions that occurred in the aftermath of the Empire Survey of Museums – cream paint for the interior of the Napier and the banal natural history museum at Trivandrum, and the equally banal mid-century changes at Canterbury – correspond to what Paul Rabinow calls "middling modernism." This refers to the ordinary world of the twentieth century, a world of statistics, universal standards and bureaucratic administration. An attempt to identify a quality which is neither as general as "modernity," nor as specific as the high culture phenomena of modernism, the concept of "middling modernism" is conditioned by both. It is especially useful in describing the spatial practices of institutions and bureaucratic organizations.

Rabinow suggests that middling modernism replaced an earlier conceptual regime he calls "techno-cosmopolitanism" in which it was acknowledged that

people are embedded in communities and in which differences between these mattered. Difference signified difference. We have seen this in the similarities and dissimilarities of the architectural histories of the Canterbury and Trivandrum museums. But, suggests Rabinow, during the twentieth century, “[u]niversalizing social norms and economic stratification gradually replaced ... environmental localisms in defining and enforcing social reality. The *plan de vie* was passing from a bacteriological and class phase to a functionalist and normalizing sociological one, the middling modernist.”⁶³ The ways in which nineteenth-century colonialism tried to think with difference were put aside. Difference, if relevant at all, became a mere veiling of sameness.⁶⁴

Part III

Domestic Frames of Practice

Chapter 8: A Tomb of One's Own

The Governor's House, Lahore

Sylvia Shorto

INTRODUCTION

The argument that values and belief systems are imprinted in various ways in material culture is now a commonplace. It is generally based on the premise of a single cultural origin, however, and so it presents some problems when we try to apply it, as this chapter will do, to understanding the adaptive reuse of buildings in a colonial context. It goes without saying that reuse of preexisting structures has been widespread in cultures throughout history, especially in the wake of conquest. However, the topic has remained almost entirely unstudied in the context of British India, and investigation shows it to provide both a useful framework and a focal point for examining changing cultural interrelationships from new perspectives. Colonial adaptations, it might be argued, are the hybrids of material culture, occupying a continuum of time and space that falls between societies. So how are we to interpret the relative values in reused buildings from a cultural landscape that would, by one definition, have been understood as that of the colonized "other"? We might pursue this problem by asking why some buildings, not others, were singled out to be put to new uses. What does their location in a changing landscape – one whose spatial logic is now often no longer easily discernible – have to tell us now about the layered ways in which interactions between colonizers and colonized were constructed and negotiated?¹

In north India, there are a number of well-documented examples of the appropriation of standing Mughal monuments for domestic, residential use by the British. This chapter takes a single, representative example in Lahore for analysis, an early seventeenth-century building that began life as the tomb of a Mughal nobleman, possibly Qasim Khan Mir Bahr. Over the centuries Qasim Khan's tomb and the land surrounding it were occupied first by Sikh soldiers and then by British officials. The tomb was built about and added to, layer upon layer, until it evolved into a grand Edwardian mansion. It served the highly public, political functions of a British Government House, and it is still used today by the establishment of the Governor

of the Punjab Province of Pakistan (Figure 8.1). The central tomb chamber, at the core of the house, was never really changed. In the course of reuse, its Mughal-period painting on stucco was restored in an orientalizing, Arts and Crafts style. The land surrounding the house was laid out as a large, informally planned garden, yet retained features that linked it back to its Mughal origins. Because of the good state of preservation of the house today, and because it is well documented in both public and private papers, Governor's House, Lahore is an important site for the study of the complicated ways in which the British actively participated in an



Figure 8.1
Interior of Governor's
House, Lahore today.
The tomb chamber is in
the background.

ongoing interaction with the built forms of India's past. From it we can read an alternative to the assumption that the British sought separation and distance in their architectural settings. This house also links the past of India to the future in Pakistan.

The overlay of a British Empire onto the Indian subcontinent was a *fait accompli* well before the final death throes of the Mughal Empire. The apparent ease with which the British were able to take and maintain control in India has led several scholars to explore indirect behaviors that might have facilitated their domination. One method, as Bernard Cohn has demonstrated, was through the adaptation of the grandeur of Mughal ritual and ceremony. Although this can be traced back to the durbars of eighteenth-century Bengal and earlier, it scaled the heights of invention with elaborately adapted forms such as the Imperial Assemblage of 1877.² Another strategy of indirect control, most thoroughly explored by Thomas Metcalf, was through the conscious appropriation and manipulation of visible elements of style from Mughal and other Indian architectural vocabularies in new, British-built monuments and public buildings.³ This chapter is part of the product of a broader investigation that seeks to integrate these approaches, with others, into an in-depth examination of the British domestic layer in urban landscapes of the former Mughal cities of north India. Through comparative strategies it asks: just how did British settlement patterns in the early nineteenth century – in particular, elite domestic settlement – relate to and resist the spatial inscription of the Mughal built environment.⁴ The methodology that I use derives from the study of material culture.⁵ In addition, in an attempt to broaden the base of discourse, I incorporate readings of individual, private papers with official, public documents. The subjective and personal accounts of individuals reveal far more of the complexities of colonial culture within specific contexts than do the more formulaic and generalizing texts of official administrators. The conventional formats and codified language of the latter resist textual analysis. Individual accounts, however, when closely read, present glimpses of the lived experience of colonialism, and are invaluable fragments of archaeological evidence of otherwise undocumented discourses and beliefs. In this chapter, both private and official accounts are considered as equal resources, and they are used in juxtaposition with a physical description of the building, and an analysis of its place in the shifting contexts of the Mughal, Sikh and colonial layers of the city. The combination of sources results in a richer and more descriptive history, and a clearer picture begins to emerge of the Indian regimes the British displaced, and the influence of established norms and forms on their own behaviors and mentalities. Colonial traffic may not flow evenly, but cultural convergence is a two-way street.

The conceptual model of hybridity offers a useful alternative to dominant ways of understanding domestic architecture by challenging established and static modes of classification. As Homi Bhabha has pointed out, the very idea of hybridity underscores the permeability of classification. Of necessity it draws attention to the possibility of new forms created in the interstices or gaps between dominant cultural forms.⁶ Once these have been identified and named, new forms produced

in this way stand out; they are more visible and thus they demand our attention.⁷ In this ongoing discourse, hybrid forms may also be seen as forms of political and cultural resistance.⁸ Nevertheless, the chapter engages this concept primarily at a material level, exploring changes to a building of mixed origins, neither Indian nor British and yet undeniably both. Qasim Khan's tomb is examined on the one hand as an example of a more general phenomenon of spatial occupation and progressive hybridization. On the other hand, an analysis of the building's specific location, and its evolving function in the development of suburban Lahore, helps to explain both its original selection for reuse by the British administration and, perhaps more significantly, its continued preservation.

THE HISTORIC FOOTPRINT OF LAHORE

The city of Lahore was "... both great and famous, in competition for the title of metropolis with Agra," wrote Sir Thomas Herbert at the end of the sixteenth century.⁹ Along with the planned cities of Fatehpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad, it was one of the four great Imperial centers of Mughal India, and it served as provincial capital of the Punjab.¹⁰ Located at a major crossing on the Ravi River at the head of the Gangetic plain, Lahore already had a long history of both strategic and commercial importance.¹¹ In 1526, Babur sacked Lahore, and the earliest extant Mughal buildings there are associated with his son Mirza Kamram's name. The city was Akbar's principal residence during the years 1584–98. According to his regnal historian, it had by then acquired the splendid aspect of a Mughal garden city, with a fort and palaces of brick and lime:

[W]hen this city was for some time the seat of government many other capital buildings were erected and laid out with taste and elegance ... it became the grand resort of people of all nations ...¹²

Jahangir visited Lahore repeatedly, and the city reached its acme of prosperity and material splendor under Shahjahan. There are also important monumental religious buildings from the period of Aurangzeb, although he never lived there.

With the dissipation of Mughal power in the eighteenth century came a time of slow destruction. Lahore was repeatedly raided and sacked by the Afghani Ahmed Shah Abdali. From 1765 there was a protracted struggle for its control between the Marathas and the Sikhs, and the city and its suburbs suffered continuing damage.¹³ When a consolidated Sikh kingdom was finally established in 1803 under Ranjit Singh (reigned 1799–1839), Lahore became a principal city again. But after years of war and neglect, its Mughal gardens and monuments stood in a landscape described by both European travelers and local historians as waste and desolate.¹⁴

Lahore was the last major city to be brought under British colonial occupation in the Indian subcontinent. In 1849 after the Second Sikh War, the British took final control of all of the Sikh territories in the Punjab, settling themselves on top of a layered built environment that now held the legacy of both the Mughal

Empire and the Sikh kingdom. It was already a hybridized environment, its inhabitants from multiple religious and cultural backgrounds. Those of its monuments that had withstood the years of strife had already often been put to new uses. In planning their use of this preexisting environment, the British brought to Lahore tried and tested organizational structures and associated settlement patterns that had already been developed across much of northern India.¹⁵ They were thus quickly able to reorder the city as the capital of their new Punjab Province. As with other north Indian cities taken in war, such as Agra and Delhi, this began with the military occupation of Sikh and Mughal Imperial buildings in the palace/citadel within the city walls. British troops were billeted there, the Diwan-i Am became a barrack room and the Moti Masjid a treasury, while horses and camels were stabled in the Khwabaghs. Nearby, Aurangzeb's great Badshahi Masjid continued to be used as a magazine, as it had been in the Sikh period. By 1850, the district Company Commander, Brigadier Tennant, had closed off the Alamgiri and Musti gates and destroyed all building on the flood plains to the north of the Fort, on the grounds that they were "objectionable from a military point of view." For his own billet, he had designs on the Shish Mahal, a fine Shahjahani pavilion in the fort where the recently defeated Sikh rulers had held court on a scale only slightly less lavish than the Mughals themselves.¹⁶

Lahore, typical of Mughal riverine settlement in India, had a walled fort containing opulent palaces, bordered to the west and north by the wandering path of the Ravi, and ringed to the south by a densely populated, fortified city. The roads leading from the thirteen gates in its walls linked the city to other centers via small "urban villages" which spilled out into the surrounding countryside.¹⁷ Interspersed among villages, in a suburban fringe mainly to the south and the east of the city, were formal gardens containing the pleasure pavilions and the monumental tombs of the Mughal elite. Apart from the military, there was little British settlement inside the walled city itself. From 1846 the Agent to the Governor General had lived, very briefly, in the town *haveli* (urban mansion) of Suchel Singh.¹⁸ But the new British rulers now had sufficient experience in the subcontinent to realize that India's densely populated urban environments did not suit their spatial requirements.¹⁹ Instead, the first British cantonment and the nucleus of a future Civil Station were situated a little to the southwest, on the site of a principal Sikh camping ground. Here, settlement was clustered to the east of a reused building from the Jahangiri period, the so-called tomb of Anarkali.²⁰ Anarkali's tomb had been used as a pleasure pavilion by Ranjit Singh, and by one of his sons, Kharak Singh.²¹ Some time after 1822 a second building, a large domed and colonnaded house, had been built in the enclosed and formal four-part garden surrounding the tomb by two French generals, Jean-Baptiste Ventura and Jean-François Allard.

Mercenary soldiers had been an essential component in the Sikh command of the Punjab. Between 1799 and 1822, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had taken control of the five fertile *doabs* between the Indus and Sutlej rivers; and from 1822 he had engaged neutral French officers to train his armies to ensure the defense of his new Kingdom. Allard and Ventura, both veterans of Napoleon's army, had

been commissioned to form elite corps of troops based upon the French model. Other European (and American) officers followed, and by 1830 more than a third of regular Sikh troops were under mercenary command. They operated alongside the Khalsa commanders.²² Generals Allard and Ventura, Avitabile, Court and others, in addition to rendering military service, had considerable political influence at the Lahore court; and Ranjit Singh's trust in his generals meant that their duties were often extended to regional administration. The headquarters of the French brigades were in Lahore, and here the French generals settled, taking Indian wives and building for themselves hybrid estates on the spoils of the Mughal Empire. By the time of the arrival of the British in Lahore there had already been extensive reuse of both gardens and standing funerary monuments as camping grounds and accommodations by the Sikh rulers, their mercenary generals and their armies, in the suburbs of the city.²³

Ranjit Singh's generals assimilated themselves into north Indian culture to a high degree. This was in part a requirement imposed by their employer.²⁴ Their way of life recalled that of many Englishmen in late eighteenth-century Bengal and elsewhere, slowly discouraged by the East India Company. There are numerous travelers' descriptions, for example, of the property shared by Generals Ventura and Allard, thought by the roving French botanist Victor Jacquemont to have been built on the ruins of a Mughal palace.²⁵ Jacquemont described a house that was "half European and half Persian" in style, with magnificent decorations in three principal, public rooms, one of which stretched the length of the building. In another, walls were "... of glass pieces set in brilliant gilding." Yet another had been "... adorned with paintings, arabesques, etc. Everywhere Persian and Kashmiri carpets of great beauty, furniture of velvet, hangings of silk and brocade, etc ..."²⁶ A contemporary German physician, Karl von Huegel, noted: "Though not of great size [it] combines the splendors of the East with the comfort of European residence."²⁷

All of the European generals had left the Punjab by 1843, under British political pressure. After the death of Ranjit Singh, the political stability he had so carefully cultivated was destroyed by warring factions among his successors, and the Punjab passed from the military control of the Sikh armies to that of the British. A single Agent or Resident guided British political affairs in Lahore during a so-called "Regency" period between two Anglo-Sikh wars (in 1846 and 1849). The celebrated soldier and administrator Henry Lawrence held this post from early in 1848. After the second war, Lawrence went on to serve as Agent and Chief Commissioner. Near the end of this "Regency" period, the Ventura/Allard residence, Anarkali House, was taken for use as both living accommodation and offices for members of the Board of Administration under his command. The British knew it as the "Big Residency" and in the spring of 1849, when the Punjab was officially annexed, Henry Lawrence moved his family there from Nepal (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2
The Anarkali Compound
in 1849, showing the
'Big Residency' (left).



MAKING HOME IN A HYBRID LANDSCAPE

Official records reveal only a limited range of facts. In the case of mid-nineteenth-century Lahore the informal, private papers of a woman, however, provide the narrative of a separate reality. In the letters of Honoria Lawrence, Henry's wife, a parallel history is written, revealing information about the experience of British domestic life that would otherwise be lost to us. Honoria Lawrence was a capable, practical and rather unconventional woman, torn between longing for her native Ireland and attachment to India, which she came to regard as home. She wrote obsessively to her elder son Aleck, who had been sent to England for his education, describing many aspects of her family life. Her accounts document the Big Residency, and the building of a new house. In 1849 she described Anarkali House as having "... one very large room, quite a public one. Papa receives visitors and transacts business there, and we have church there every Sunday afternoon."²⁸ This public room was also known as the Durbar Room. The wall paintings of Sikh days are nowhere mentioned, so we can assume that the room was whitewashed over, a utilitarian act that fitted British public function. The Lawrences themselves lived in a suite in this house, in "... two large lofty rooms with folding doors between. One is Papa's office, where he sits most of the day at a large desk writing, and looking at office papers, and receiving business visitors ... The other room is our bed-room, and a large red screen divides off a part where I sit constantly."²⁹ Honoria was expecting another child at this time.

The business of settling British territorial claims in the Punjab meant a stream of new arrivals in Lahore. Those who had nowhere to go went to the Residency first, or lived in tents pitched nearby, and the house was described as teeming with people. Honoria, who had been traveling in India in the wake of her husband's

career for several years, complained: "Every room and every bed in the Residency and adjoining houses filled or over-filled, and crowds everywhere."³⁰ She desperately wanted privacy and a home of her own, and in 1850, after the formal annexation of the Punjab, plans for a new house were drawn up for the Lawrence family. This was to be built around another Mughal tomb, situated some three miles from the Anarkali compound on a wide, new British-built road, the Mall. This road led out towards the shrine of Mian Mir, where a large cantonment was already under construction.³¹ Anarkali would subsequently become the nexus of the Civil Station, and its separation from the cantonment would help determine the plan of modern Lahore.³² The Lawrence's house was equidistant between the two.

We have already seen that Lahore's pre-British suburban development was determined by a system of roads leading from the gates of the city. These fanned out towards Agra and Delhi, Multan and Kabul by way of Peshawar, and the "urban villages" that clung to their sides served the needs of the city. Twice in the Mughal period the principal road, later called the Grand Trunk Road by the British, had changed its course as it approached Lahore from the east. For Mughal rulers, their viceroys and governors, roads had had an important ceremonial function. In the heyday of the city, nobles had processed along them conspicuously to take their ease in its famous gardens – the Gulabi Bagh, the Nakhli Bagh, the Shalamar Bagh. Over the course of the Mughal period there had been a pattern of change in the location and function of Lahore's gardens. Once concentrated on the western bank of the river at Shahdara or to the south of the city on its riverside, they then clustered around its principal gate, the Delhi gate. In the time of Shahjahan, new gardens were built in the eastern suburb, most important of which was the Shalamar, and older residential sites were then often converted into tomb gardens.³³ At Shalamar, designed as a residential garden at a half-day's march from the citadel, there were once "... so many edifices ... that whenever it pleases the Emperor to pay a visit to it with the Royal Harem ... the necessity of pitching tents is avoided."³⁴ Ranjit Singh later built a new marble pavilion there, and the gardens were regarded as his private property, and as the property of his heirs.³⁵ In the Sikh period the Shalamar Bagh took on a special significance as it was situated on the route from Lahore to the holy city of Amritsar. Although the Sikhs had rejected many of the Mughal forms of status and prestige, they actively participated in the Mughal garden tradition. They reused many gardens, both as residential or pleasure sites, and for use by their armies. Much other new construction from the Sikh period, on the alluvial bank to the north of the Fort (Ranjit Singh's Royal Gardens) and elsewhere in the suburbs, was later demolished.³⁶

The suburban fringe of Lahore also contained an area of *mazars*, the shrines of Sufi saints, many built during the life of the mystically inclined Dara Shikoh. These were a public locus for the people of the city, who used the gardens surrounding shrines for fairs and other gatherings.³⁷ The tomb chosen as a house for Henry Lawrence and his family was in this part of Lahore's suburban fringe. It was to the south and a little to the east of the walled city where, until the time of the construction of Mall Road, linking the old Multan road to the southerly fork of

the road to Delhi, there were no principal routes out of the city. A freestanding octagonal tomb in a now ruinous garden, it possibly held the mortal remains of Qasim Khan Mir Bahr, a younger, distant cousin of the emperor Akbar and a *mansabdar* with the rank of 5,000 horse.³⁸ The occupant of the tomb was locally known as a patron of wrestling, so the tomb was referred to as the *gumbez kushtiwala* or dome of the wrestler.³⁹ In plan it was an irregular (Baghdadi) octagon on a high platform or *chabutra*, and inside it comprised a spectacular square chamber with two tiers of ornamented niches that rose by means of net-vaulted squinches to a single dome. In a crypt below lay a burial slab, covering the remains of the deceased.

The grounds surrounding Qasim Khan's tomb had served as a military cantonment in the Sikh period, and the tomb itself had been occupied by a Jemadar, Khushhal Singh, so it was also locally known as the Jemadar's House.⁴⁰ Khushhal Singh's nephew and heir, the Khalsa commander Raja Tej Singh, inherited the property, and after his defeat by the British he agreed to exchange it for a confiscated house and gardens in nearby Sialkot known as Hakim Rai's house.⁴¹ After 1849 it was briefly occupied by Mr Boring and Maj. Macgregor, Deputy Commissioners in Henry Lawrence's Agency. Conversion of the tomb into a permanent house for the senior British official in the Punjab took place between March 1850 and December 1851. Plans and estimates were prepared by Lt. Col. Napier, then the Civil Engineer of the Punjab, and the work was executed by Lt. Fagan, Engineer-in-Charge, Civil Buildings in Lahore, with Lawrence's close supervision. Napier and Fagan also built Mall Road. Permission was sanctioned for Rs. 10,000 to be spent on the conversion, which ended up costing about Rs. 16,600, out of which 2,500 were paid to the tenant-in-possession.⁴²

To live in a Mughal tomb was not new to the British, and it does not seem to have been an undertaking that appeared to them to be in any way irreverent. In fact, it was seen, and justified, as a means of saving endangered or derelict buildings. By these means, any troubled sensibilities on the part of local communities could be effectively ignored. The behavior had caused problems earlier in the century in Delhi when Mr Blake, a civil servant, was murdered, ostensibly for desecrating the tomb of Adham Khan.⁴³ Quite ignoring this history, less than ten years later in 1844 the new Agent at the Court in Delhi, Thomas Metcalfe, made additions to a nearby tomb at Mehrauli in order to be situated close to the gardens of the Zafar Mahal, the country palace of the last Emperor, Bahadur Shah II. Metcalfe's well-documented tomb/house, also octagonal in plan, was adapted to create a small, gem-like country house in an expansively landscaped estate. Metcalfe laid out his garden to incorporate major Islamic monuments – the Qutb Minar and the tomb of Adham Khan – like giant follies at the terminal points of his vistas.⁴⁴ In Delhi in 1843, Honoria Lawrence had toured this area, perhaps while Metcalfe's house was under construction, and had admired the beauty of the sepulchral landscape in which it stood. "On every side [tombs] stand as close as cells in a honeycomb," she wrote in her journal, little knowing she would soon be living in a tomb of her own.⁴⁵

Honoria Lawrence's papers allow us to piece together the stages of her

family's move just a few years later into Qasim Khan's converted tomb. They reveal the extent of British reuse of different building types at this period in Lahore's history. While they waited for their new house to be completed, the Lawrence family embarked on a tour of short-term occupancy of several other Sikh and Mughal monuments. First, because Henry was unwell, the family left the chaos of the Big Residency to stay with Robert Montgomery, another Deputy Commissioner under Lawrence's Agency, then living in the Shah Chiraghi mosque.⁴⁶ Honoria wrote without irony that they had come

for a change of air to Mr. Montgomery's house, two or three miles from our own ... I like very much being in a smaller house than the Residency. There is one great room here, 45 feet long, 35 feet wide, and 25 feet high, with a gallery at one end. Every sound echoes through it, and it looks a huge, gaping place for our present small party to sit down in.⁴⁷

Later, in the early spring of 1851, they moved to tents in the Shalamar gardens. They then moved into tents in Lt. Fagan's garden where, according to young Harry Lawrence, there was a house with *kashi* decoration, another appropriation. "The house I told you of that we are living in," he wrote to his brother, "... in the chimneypiece of this house there are little bits of looking glass, white and red and green."⁴⁸ This house was probably Kamran's *baradari*.

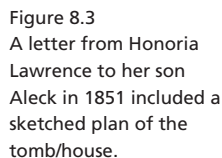
By March the conversion of the tomb of Qasim Khan was well under way despite setbacks. "Part ... is roofed in," wrote Harry. "It is not quite finished, but most of the rooms are. Our *varanda* is not quite finished."⁴⁹ Honoria enclosed a plan. She wrote:

It is not well drawn, but it will show you that if we have not got a paragon of a house we have at least got an octagon The house stands on a "chabootra" or raised platform about twelve foot high. The centre room is the original, native building, lofty and domed, into which we have put a sky-light. The rooms and verandah all round we are building. They are 24 feet high.⁵⁰

The plan of the new house was determined by the Baghdadi octagon of the tomb, with four large rooms and four triangular interstices built on the *chabutra* (Figure 8.3). An encircling veranda around the periphery contained bathrooms. Honoria's sketch is borne out in the fabric of the house today: one triangular space and the room that had been her bedroom still cling to the side of the tomb as a part of the present-day structure.

In April of 1851 the Lawrences moved into tents in their own garden to wait till the tomb/house was finally finished. They spent that summer in the hills and took possession later in the same year. By Christmas of 1851 their move was complete. "Now we are in a settled home together," wrote Honoria, "... and with a peace inwardly and outwardly that makes life very happy."⁵¹ She gave the house a name, "Alhenho," a word made from pieces of her children's names, and she wrote that she would be more than content to spend the rest of her life there. But her family would live in this house for only a short time. Henry was transferred to the Rajputana Residency at Mount Abu in 1852, and less than a year later Honoria had succumbed to a fever and was dead.

Having converted the tomb of Qasim Khan into a house, the British authorities chose several times to alter and improve it for the same function – to accommodate the senior British official in the Punjab. Following the Rebellion of 1857, when the Punjab was politically reconstituted as a British province under the direct authority of the Crown, Robert Montgomery was appointed Lieutenant Governor and in



1859 the tomb/house, now a Government House, was enlarged for a new, more public and more permanent role. More rooms were fitted around the *chabutra* at ground-floor level, and the outer octagon of verandas and bathrooms was widened.⁵² A semicircular projection doubled the size of the drawing room, which was now reached by external stairs from a classicizing *porte-cochere*. The dome was encased in an octagonal turret (Figure 8.4). As a result, Qasim Khan's tomb chamber, at its heart, was buried even deeper within the fabric of the house. The new additions were given a standard detailing of Public Works Gothic. Outbuildings included a *hathikhana* or stable for elephants and a shed for the camels that pulled the Lieutenant Governor's eccentric ceremonial carriage along the Mall. And while the back of the spacious garden retained its gridded Mughal footprint (now as a vegetable garden and orchard), the front started to take on the informally planned aspect of the park of an English country house, with a curving driveway and large expanses of manicured lawn. Mr Montgomery now lived in a style befitting a Lieutenant Governor, and drew a sumptuary allowance "on the scale provided for the Lt. Governor of the North West Provinces, to maintain personal attendants"⁵³ The house remained this way until 1892, the centre of civil and military society and public ceremony in British Punjab.

The final decades of the nineteenth century were a time of notable activity in monumental house building in British India. Now was the time of necessary replacement of many earlier-built Government Houses. Over the course of the century the use of rooms had changed dramatically in Britain, with an increase in functional specificity and a clear distinction now between public and private space.⁵⁴ And although separation had never been easy to attain in India, where domestic space had always been more permeable in and of itself, current British social requirements now dictated necessary changes to houses with older plans.⁵⁵ The large late-Victorian houses with multiple rooms that now went up all over the subcontinent also spoke volumes of how British imperial illusions of permanence had hardened into grandiosity. In Simla, Viceregal Lodge (1888), sited high in the hills and commanding a magisterial view of the source of northern India's life-sustaining and symbolic rivers, set an imposing precedent. Qasim Khan's tomb escaped demolition, but the house around it was again enlarged. In 1892 the south wing with Gothic verandas was lengthened to terminate in an eccentric projecting *mirador* window in a kind of pan-orientalizing Moorish taste, designed by John Lockwood Kipling, principal of the Mayo School of Art (Figure 8.5). The wing contained a Durbar Hall on the upper floor, used for formal political occasions. Very large public entertainments were held in one of the Assembly Rooms, Montgomery Hall, built in the 1860s in a 112-acre British public park, part menagerie, part pleasure garden, directly across Mall Road.⁵⁶ The Durbar Hall would later serve as the Council Chamber when additions to the house continued in the first decade of the twentieth century. Then, an even larger, grander Durbar Hall in a Classical style was built in anticipation of a Royal Visit. Modernization now began in earnest: electric light was installed and garages were built, as Daimlers replaced camels and elephants. There was at this time a renewed interest in Mughal garden details: an

Figure 8.4
Engraving of the house
at mid-century.

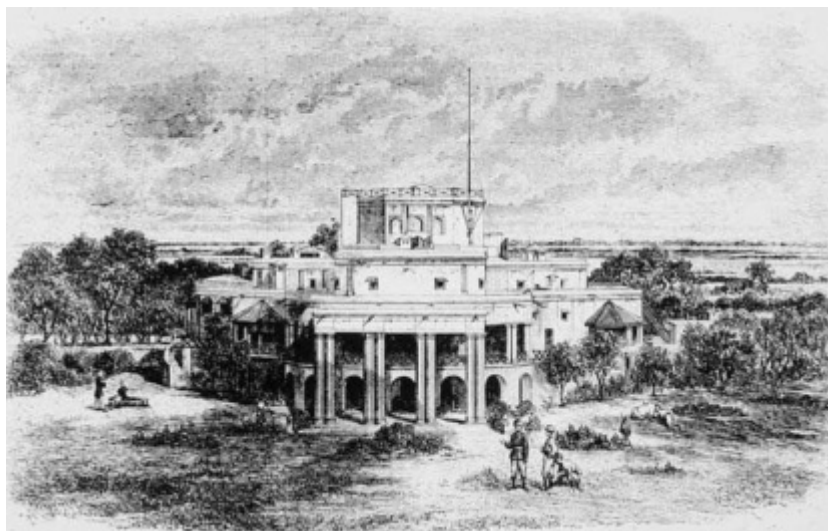


Figure 8.5
Photograph of the house
after the Kipling
additions.



allée of cypress trees and a marble *baradari* (garden pavilion) were added in 1908. Finally in 1914 the north wing was enlarged again, doubling its size, when a grand integral ballroom was added. This was deemed necessary when an attempt on the Lieutenant Governor's life made the use of external Assembly Rooms less than secure. For other than procession to the Civil Station or the cantonment, the British confined more and more of their activities within the compound of Governor's House, which was now ready to face the changes that the rest of the twentieth century would bring.

But what of the tomb chamber deep inside a house that, to the unsuspecting eye, was apparently nothing more than the oddly shaped and stylistically

confused effort of the Public Works Department? Neither the Victorian Gothic detailing nor even the orientalizing *mirador* window gave a hint of the imaginative chaos, like a secret garden, that was hidden at its core and that completely belied its rationalized and engineer-designed exterior. We have detailed descriptions of the inside of the house from Honoria Lawrence's day, when it was utilitarian and sparsely furnished. "Your first impressions would be of a naked, comfortless room," she had written of her bedroom, with a "ceiling [of] bare beams and rafters ... [and] walls bare lime, colored grey."⁵⁷ Neither Honoria nor her observant children mentioned any decorations, and so we can assume that the "large centre room" next door, the original tomb chamber, was also lime-washed at that time, as the Big Residency had been. But – part of the continuum of hybridity – the British now went as far as to take an interest in the restoration of the tomb they had "rescued"; and sometime between 1851 and 1876 the room miraculously blossomed into all-over decoration when its early Mughal net-vaulted tracery and raised, cut-stucco decoration were re-painted in full color by students from Lahore's Mayo School of Art.⁵⁸

One of the aims of the Mayo School of Industrial Art had been to help Indian students sustain unbroken traditions of "living" Indian arts within the imposed structure of formal Victorian art education. John Lockwood Kipling, the Mayo principal from 1875, and other advocates of the decorative arts and crafts in colonial India, had expressed a very real concern that indigenous crafts were being excluded from the design process. In the opinion of the spearhead of the movement, William Morris, and his colleagues in England, the recognized excellence of India's craft tradition related directly to the very social structure within which it was transmitted – that is, within workshops (*karkhanas*) or local guilds.⁵⁹ One of the more lamentable consequences of the exclusion of the guilds from the design process, in Kipling's view, were the hundreds of featureless and anonymous Public Works buildings going up in India that bore no relation to indigenous architecture.⁶⁰ Kipling attempted to remedy this, and the variety of designs used in the dining room of the Governor's House suggests that students used its walls as a practice ground for replicating the arabesques of the other monuments they were currently studying and recording.⁶¹ It remains to be determined to what extent their painting represents a British view of what Mughal decoration should have been. Some of it might have been restoration of original decoration, obscured under limewash; some was reproduction; some looked more like the handiwork of an Arts and Crafts designer. The room expressed a *horror vacui*: even the Victorian fireplace, installed perhaps in Honoria's day, was given a Timurid zigzag design (Figure 8.6). Because the tomb chamber was painted in tempera and not true fresco, it proved hard to maintain; so later in the century, the dado level would be hidden by carved Burmese teak paneling, also associated, like the *mirador* window of that decade, with the efforts of John Lockwood Kipling.⁶²

THE SURVIVAL OF QASIM KHAN'S TOMB

Qasim Khan's tomb survived the British period despite several additions and successive remodelings of the grand house that now enclosed it and of the garden that surrounded it. By its continued existence it argues eloquently that, though the history of colonization was one of imposition and control, it was also one of ever-changing phases of assimilation and hybridity. The orientalizing changes to the house are linked to other style currents. As Thomas Metcalf has pointed out, architects from the late 1860s drew liberally on the characteristic details of selected Indian buildings to create an architecture now called (for the sake of convenience) "Indo-Saracenic" – an architecture that publicly proclaimed the legitimate involvement of Britain in India's history through the use of indigenous, in particular Indian Islamic, styles. Metcalf has traced this back to an 1866 building by Robert Chisholm.⁶³ Then a young architect, Chisholm adapted the eighteenth-century Chepauk Palace in Madras into an office building of distinctly Islamic inspiration. The project was heralded as having "set the first example of a revival in native art."⁶⁴ But the appropriation and reuse of actual Mughal buildings certainly predates this turn to indigenous models in the design of public buildings. It occurred in different forms from the earliest English presence in the subcontinent, and it comprises yet another thread in the history of architecture in India.

Still to be fully explored, though outside the immediate scope of the present discussion, is the relationship between appropriation and adaptive reuse, and emerging attitudes to historic preservation in India. During the final decades of the eighteenth century, when Britain was establishing fiscal dominance, India was seen as a society in decline. By the early nineteenth century, picturesque sensibilities were helping to shift perceptions of India's former glory into an antiquarian vision of the past. The selective restoration of monuments was undertaken locally in Delhi and elsewhere as early as the 1820s, and provincial antiquarian societies were formed soon after this, influenced by the scholarly attention given to history and monuments by the English Orientalists in Calcutta.

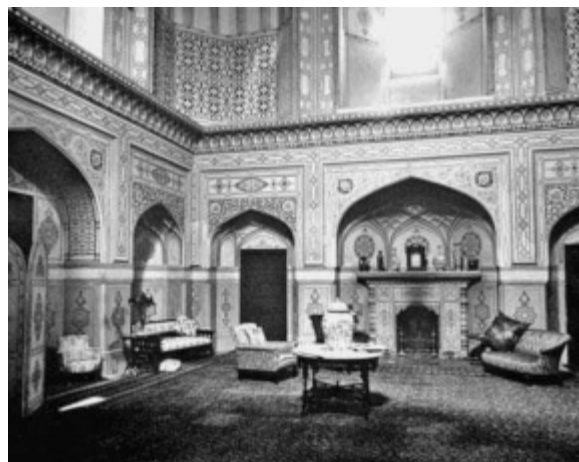


Figure 8.6
Late nineteenth-century
photograph of the tomb
chamber, furnished then
as a sitting room.

But there was a dark political underbelly to this expansion of knowledge. Local involvement in the conservation of monuments was often politically motivated. Initially, it was not thought by the British that there were any buildings in Lahore worth large expenditure for conservation. But predating the legislation to form an Archaeological Survey of India in 1862 by more than ten years, the Governor General Lord Dalhousie, on a stately progress across the Punjab in November 1850, observed on the subject of repair that "... a great deal may be done at small expense by a little care and interest, and all will tend to gratify the inhabitants of the province over which British rule has been established."⁶⁵ Henry Lawrence himself had the Wazir Khan mosque in Lahore cleaned of the accumulated debris of Sikh days, and by 1851 had made necessary repairs to the tomb of Jehangir, to the Chauburj, and to the Badshahi Masjid, where a minaret was in danger of collapsing. Sir John Lawrence, his brother and successor, restored the latter to the Muslim community in 1856. An official document following up his comments referred to the architecture "of former dynasties," indicating that the British in their munificence already regarded themselves as the dynastic heirs of the Mughals and of the Sikh kingdom as well.⁶⁶ Small monuments play their part in this particular history of preservation.

One premise of my argument has been that the tomb of Qasim Khan constitutes an example of a new hybrid type, identified as much by its relationship to the landscapes of the past as by the fact of its appropriation and reuse. Reused tombs and other Mughal monuments were often located in places that, on closer examination, are found to have a deep contextual resonance. Thus the use of Qasim Khan's tomb by the British in the changing landscape of colonial Lahore, and the intermeshing of this new landscape with landscapes of the past, can broaden our understanding of the interactions between the British and the people they now sought to rule. British life was played out on a far more public stage in nineteenth-century India than was the case in Britain. In the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857–8, when the British government assumed direct responsibility for Indian affairs, there was an increased concern with projecting the image of the Indian empire as a feudal order.⁶⁷ Although Hanoverian society in Britain had put itself publicly and ritualistically on display, it was in the greater British world in the nineteenth century that hierarchy was constantly dramatized, and the established order made visible. Even before 1857 the British seemed ready to assume a position as the dynastic heirs of the Mughals. Throughout the first half of the century, the very public entries and progresses of the British proclaimed a formal and ornamental hybridity through careful gradations of status and rank.⁶⁸

Emulation of ceremonial behavior accounts in part for the way the British in India overlaid themselves onto spatial environments created by previous dynasties. In Lahore, the Mughal and the Sikh kingdoms had already etched onto the landscape a memory of hierarchy and control through the placement of roads, monuments and, in particular, gardens.⁶⁹ Both Mughal and Sikh gardens were important markers of dynastic space; and early Mughal gardens have elsewhere been read as a continuum of opposition between the established citadels of the conquered and

these new gardens themselves, which were laid out on opposite river banks as both markers of territorial victory and statements of difference.⁷⁰ Later gardens, also crucial to Mughal regnal definition, have been described as nodes in an elite web of ceremonial movement.⁷¹ Both proclaimed different stages of the presence of an absolutist system of rule. The Sikh military rulers settled on top of, appropriated, and also closely emulated these environments in their new building. When the British laid out new roads and settlements in Lahore, they took advantage of the resonance of both Mughal and Sikh patterns of settlement, using a language of the history of those they now controlled. They marked out their own, different territorial oppositions, between the civil or administrative space of government and the military space that reinforced it, along a new web of roads that linked their new landscape. The Governor's House, the seat of British ceremony, was in a garden at the point of intersection of the two.

The selection and use of the Qasim Khan's tomb, its situation in the landscape, and the preservation of its painted central chamber point up the shortcomings, in a hybrid cultural environment such as that of nineteenth-century Lahore, of locating identity along an axis too strictly defined as either Indian or British. The British chose for their Governor's House a tomb in a garden. This was not located on the sites of Mughal conquest on the opposite bank of the Ravi at Shahdara, or on the new spur of the Mughal-built Grand Trunk Road, but on their own new road leading from the Civil Station to Mian Mir cantonment. However, the new territorial claims of the British elite were layered onto the memory of old authority. Gardens had been the primary locus of Mughal political affairs and the signature of Mughal territorial authority. The British mimicked the spatial patterns of the Mughal elite, creating a complex hybrid house. They knew the deep importance of spatial hierarchy as part of the public presence they wished to maintain as they moved to control all of India, and this was achieved in part through visual control in the landscape. Charlotte Canning, the first Vicereine, on a tour of north India following the Rebellion of 1857–8, understood all of this quite clearly when she wrote home to Queen Victoria in 1859, "... in this country it is very necessary to speak to the eye."⁷²

Chapter 9: The Other Face of Primitive Accumulation

The Garden House in British Colonial Bengal¹

Swati Chattopadhyay

THE PARADOX OF COLONIAL MODERNITY

The bourgeoisie by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production ... compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production ... it creates a world after its own image.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*²

In explaining the mystery of capital's origins, Marx introduced the idea of "primitive accumulation" as the "process of divorcing the producer from the means of production."³ The history of this expropriation of the peasantry, Marx argued, "assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different periods."⁴ The "classic form" occurred in England. Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, tillage land was enclosed into pastures "under circumstances of reckless terrorism," and the displaced peasantry forced into industrial towns as wage laborers. The obverse of this "clearing" of the countryside was the emergence of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century country house; the large estates in the countryside would be transformed from pastures to pleasure grounds and parkland. Marx offered the example of the Duchess of Sutherland's clearing in Scotland as a poignant demonstration of the culmination of primitive accumulation in the conspicuous consumption of nature.⁵

Primitive accumulation, however, was *realized* differently in the distant colonies than in the metropole. The mystery of capital's origin in Bengal is a story of the necessary twist – necessary contradiction of capitalism – that produced a landscape fundamentally different from the Scottish countryside.⁶ Taking the example of the elite residence in the Bengal countryside as the material expression of social and political domination, I want to explore this difference in configuration.

One could argue that, as in Scotland, the country house in British colonial Bengal may be seen as a culmination of capital's processes and fortunes, the emblem of a modernized agricultural system and "improvement." The Bengal

country house was indeed a modern building type, and yet it is difficult to sustain the image of the country house as a tool and manifestation of "improvement." The very idea of "improvement" was so inflected in Bengal by the peculiarities of colonial possession and dispossession, and the continuation of precolonial practices, that the country house came to function very differently in both everyday practice and popular imagination than one might expect in Britain. In fact, the term "country house" was rarely used to refer to this building type in Bengal. In popular parlance it was the "garden house."

A recognition of the peculiarities of the colonial context of Bengal is necessary to understand the process by which the garden house came to stand for multiple, often contradictory, values. Specifically meant to invoke a "country" image, it ended up representing the dominance of the city over the country, harboring and proliferating a range of conflicts and contradictions: between the landed gentry and the poor villagers, land in its productive capacity and in its aestheticized version as landscape; exclusive enclaves removed from the nation's masses and the creative locus of an anti-colonial nationalist culture, and between native values and received, foreign values. In Bengali literary imagination these contradictions became crystallized by the late nineteenth century. Garden houses came to be seen as haunts of a city-based elite who were completely estranged from the culture and social life of the countryside, even as these spaces continued to be used by the nationalist elite as "rural" retreats.

In British colonial Bengal, we can recognize the process of primitive accumulation occurring at two levels: at the level of the colonial populace per se, and at the level of the colonial peasantry, although capital's effect on the peasantry vis-à-vis the colonized elite and middle classes was very different. The middle class was itself a result of processes deeply tied to the upheaval in the countryside – in the new dispossession of the peasantry instituted by colonial rule, and most saliently expressed in form and execution by the Permanent Settlement of Bengal. At least the landed elite and upper stratum of the middle class benefited from the dispossession of the peasantry. And yet, just as the dispossession of the colonial peasantry by primitive accumulation was not primarily a means of turning them into industrial wage labor, neither would the colonized middle class turn out to be the bourgeoisie in control of the means of production. Modernization by the colonial state was not meant to provide the colonial populace with the means of capitalist industrialization. The primary function of distant colonies was to supply resources – raw material – to support capitalist industrialization in the metropole. This meant that a high premium was placed on freeing up labor for the production of cash crops. This also meant that concepts such as private property, freedom of contract, could never carry the same meanings in the colonies; the rule of "colonial difference" applied.⁷ This has important repercussions on what we understand to be modernity in the colonies.

First, "dispossession" came to be recognized as a systemic objective of the colonial state, that which the colonized did not have the political power to address. Colonial domination in the domain of politics and public life would create a sense

of disempowerment that precariously and provisionally linked the upper classes to the peasantry.⁸ Second, the unsettling socioeconomic and political effects of reorganizing land relations in the countryside brought about by the Permanent Settlement ensured that the city–countryside problematic become a mainstay of the discourse on modernity in Bengal.

The kinds of identification and conflict between classes and vested interests that the colonial state induced would have enduring consequences for the Indian nationalist movement in its bid for hegemony. In the long term, denied access to the means of production, the Bengali middle class would use the realm of culture as an entrée into the political. Capitalism's colonial contradiction would thus produce the very paradox of colonial modernity. Wrought in relation to the West, the most imaginative strand of colonial modernity (*not* colonizer's modernity) produced an insistent critique of capitalist modernization; it had a distinct "anti-modern" strain. Colonial modernity was premised on the fact that capital *could not* produce "a world *after* its own image" (emphasis mine); rather it attempted to produce a world *for* its own image – to shape the image of the European bourgeoisie by creating a differential topography. The garden house in Bengal exemplified this paradox of colonial modernity.

SETTLING THE LAND

The Permanent Settlement of 1793, which fixed forever the revenue assessed on the land in the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, proceeded on the important assumption that institution of private property as a permanent benefit was the only basis of political stability and economic prosperity. In the notion of private property, British authorities found an ideal tool to guarantee extraction of revenue via native proprietors. Philip Francis, the most important advocate and author of the Settlement, in fact, referred to Bengal as England's "estate" – "the greatest, and the most improvable, and the most secure."⁹ It is important to note that the proprietors had received "in effect a property right in revenue collection or in the rental of the land, rather than the land itself."¹⁰ The property right could be sold off by the colonial state if the revenue was not paid by sunset of the appointed day. Private property here is a tool of colonial domination. Alexander Dow had spoken plainly on this point, denying the prospect that private property might infuse a "spirit of freedom" among the natives, and thus become dangerous to British rule: "To give them property would only bind them with stronger ties to our interest: and make them more our subjects, or, if the British nation prefers the name – more our slaves."¹¹ Inequality was to be instituted between colonizer and native proprietors, as well as between proprietors and the mass of peasants.

The *zamindars* in Bengal were supposed to be fashioned after "improving" landlords in Britain. However, the "patina of feudalism" was never taken off the image of the new *zamindar*.¹² Philip Francis, the great "believer in inequality," repeatedly insisted that the old sense of class hierarchy be maintained; landlords should be treated as "natural" superiors. While the Settlement turned land into

commodity, with the possibility that the proprietors may become a new moneyed class with no hereditary claims to the land, the very logic of the Settlement ensured the continuation of feudal relations.¹³

The Permanent Settlement was a document of desperate inaccuracy, whose chief goal was to create in Bengal an export surplus of cash crops, a steady source of revenue, and a market for British goods. As Ranajit Guha points out, Andrew Patullo, another early spokesperson for the Permanent Settlement, saw in the permanent settlement of land far-reaching consequences of a new land and goods market benefiting British commerce.¹⁴ Echoing Patullo, Thomas Law argued that if the Indian is "taught to exchange surplus for his own benefits in multiplying enjoyments, what a prospect it would open to the consumption of the manufactures of Great Britain."¹⁵

That the native landed gentry would take to building country residences, and filling them with European furnishing, would not, however, proceed as unproblematically as Patullo or Law had envisioned. In fact, such building activity *predated* the Permanent Settlement. Also, it is important to note that the Permanent Settlement may not provide clues to every facet of the garden house. But its effect on both British and Bengali imagination is undeniable.

If one of the major goals of the Permanent Settlement was to constitute a class of proprietors of land through whom surplus could be extracted as revenue, the other goal was to retain agrarian peace by giving certain legal-political protection to small peasant proprietors who had enjoyed customary right to the land. From the very beginning of the enactment of the Settlement, colonial revenue officials were concerned about the possibility of excessive rent extortion by the new proprietors, even as they felt it necessary to arm the *zamindars* with "drastic and arbitrary power of distraint" to ensure the regular collection of revenue.¹⁶ The state's goal was to keep small peasant farming relatively undisturbed, causing minimum dislocation to the basic production organization of the economy.¹⁷ Such contradictory policies minimized the risk of capitalization of agricultural production. Also, such "protection" of the small peasantry, it was assumed, would work against any effort to mobilize the peasantry against the state. The consequences were far-reaching.

By the mid-nineteenth century, most land in Bengal had been settled, and between the fixed revenue due to the state and the rent that could be extracted, the process produced a "vast structure of rentier interests."¹⁸ Left with few alternative avenues of investment, the Bengali middle classes sank their modest savings in purchasing proprietary or intermediary rights to the land. Turned around, ownership of landed property would become the very sign of middle-class well-being. This, and the gradual splitting of the large *zamindari* estates of the early nineteenth century through inheritance, contributed to a "distinct process of differentiation within the class of landed proprietors."¹⁹ By the late nineteenth century there were few large *zamindari* estates left at the top, land interests being split into innumerable small holdings.

The changing structure of landed interests transformed the topography, as

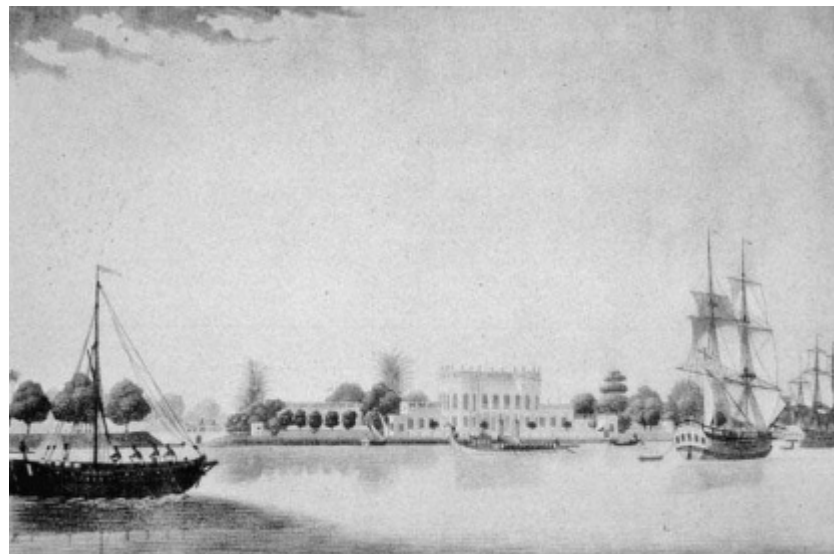
much as it affected the social and political life of Bengal and the way the garden house, as an emblem of landed interests, came to be imagined in Bengali literature. During the 160 years that the Permanent Settlement lasted, such garden houses garnered, in Bengali imagination, meanings other than that of an improved estate. I shall focus on two of the most commonly recurring and seemingly contrasting values associated with the garden house – the British representation of the garden house as a symbol of a successful, improved estate, and the Bengali imagination of the garden house as a space haunted by excessive consumption. This contrast is even more significant because the garden house was a building type shared between the British and Bengalis. The difference, therefore, did not reside in the physical configuration, but in the meaning assigned to the form.

COUNTRY LIVING

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the garden houses along the banks of the Hooghly were some of the first buildings that visitors saw as their ships approached Calcutta. In British travelogues and paintings they appear as serene white edifices planted with lush gardens and orchards, the very image of colonial success (Figure 9.1). While pleasure pavilions and hunting lodges existed in pre-British India as part of the Mughal court culture (the landscape as an exercise in aesthetics and authority was well established during Mughal rule), during British colonial rule the garden house acquired valences that were new and “modern” – linked to the matrix of capitalism and colonialism. The land itself was at stake, and the house was important only as a part that represented the whole landscape.

A great many buildings fell under the rubric of the garden house: modest to large suburban residences that were a short ride from the administrative center of

Figure 9.1
James Moffat, *View on the Banks of the Hooghly near Calcutta, the Country Residence of William Farquharson Esqr.*, Calcutta, 1800.



Calcutta, extensive estates with lavishly appointed villas, houses along the river banks stretching some 50 miles both northwards and southwards, plantation houses – primarily indigo plantations located in both the eastern and western districts of Bengal – as well as weekend pleasure gardens and country retreats.

The term “garden house” was a literal translation of the Bengali word *bagan-bari*, and such houses derived their architectural characteristics from the local milieu. What made a garden house desirable stemmed from the Bengali understanding of a good rural property, including a pond or tank stocked with fish, plentiful orchards of mango, coconut, and other fruit trees, a bamboo grove acting as a windbreak and protection against the sun in the west, cattle sheds, and, of course, a granary.²⁰ This image was then overlaid with aesthetic prerogatives and notions of landed privilege that Europeans carried with them to the colony. The land had to be well drained, and the house preferably located on high ground, commanding an extensive view of the surrounding land.

Often used interchangeably with the terms “bungalow” and “villa,” the appellation of the garden house implied the existence of considerable property around the house.

In fact, the first condition of a desirable garden house was a well-planted garden, so much so that in both Bengali and English the term “garden” was often used to refer to the garden *with* the house, as in this advertisement from 1803:

A very large capital extensive garden, formerly belonging to the late Sir Charles W. Blunt, sixty-one beegahs²¹ ground, with three tanks, well stocked with fish of different kinds; the premises laid out in the most modern taste, with a great variety both of country and China fruit-trees; there is also a small but neat pukka house, raised from the ground, and built on beams, with necessary out-offices, together with several large long sheds and cow houses with the stalls, troughs, and posts, &c., for feeding bullocks, and convenient houses for breeding mares, and bringing up colts: the whole being a very valuable and eligible property for that purpose; situated about three miles from town, on the south side of the great newly made road to Dum-Dum.²²

In the above example, the economic value of the garden is laid out as it would be for a farm, and the house occupies a less salient role in the advertisement than the outhouses, which are enumerated in detail. Such large gardens, measuring 50 to 100 beegahs, were indeed valued for their economic productivity and viewed as small plantations, but even for small gardens that covered no more than 4 or 5 beegahs, advertisers went into the trouble of furnishing the details of the provisions in the garden, often delineating the kind of seeds that were used to set up the garden, the types of rare fruit trees on the premises, the quality of the fresh water supply and the vegetable garden.²³

If a well-laid-out garden was the hallmark of good property, its second condition of desirability stemmed from its location in relation to other gardens in the vicinity.²⁴ This sense of relating to other pieces of property gave the outskirts of the city a loose sense of being woven into a suburban fabric. Such suburban houses were also noted for their desirable proximity to the city center: “Only 40 minutes’

ride in a palanquin from the Old Court House," noted an advertisement for an upper-roomed garden house in "a pleasant, retired part of Dihee Entally."²⁵

Apart from the dense configuration of the city center around Tank Square, and along the main arteries of Chitpore Road, Dhurumtola Street and Bowbazaar Street, much of the city consisted of open fields, ponds and marshes, and agricultural land on the east. Garden houses of various sizes dotted this landscape, organizing the rural landscape into a patchwork pattern that extended from Chowringhee southwards, and the Circular Road on the east and north (Figure 9.2). The suburbs of Belgachhia and Dumdum on the northeast, Entally on the east, and Russapuglah, Alipore, Bhabanipore and Ballygunge on the south were coveted locations of garden houses for both Europeans and Indians alike.

As a rule, garden houses were fashioned as exclusive enclaves marked by well-defined boundary walls, an aspect that was only enhanced in garden houses located farther away from the city.²⁶ In contemporary maps we find such premises designated by orchards or an avenue of trees, a straight or curved drive, a tank, and the usual rectangular footprint of the house (Figure 9.3). The house itself was planned after a three-bay pattern formed around a central hall, with its long axis oriented north–south.²⁷ This pattern of the plan, as I have argued elsewhere, arose not from British architectural practices, but from the Indian practice of organizing rooms around a central courtyard, the latter's place taken in these houses by the large central hall.²⁸ Entry was from the north, leaving the southern aspect open for a wide veranda, so as to enjoy the cooling southern breeze. This rule of access was rarely altered, even in garden houses on the Hooghly (flowing north–south), which

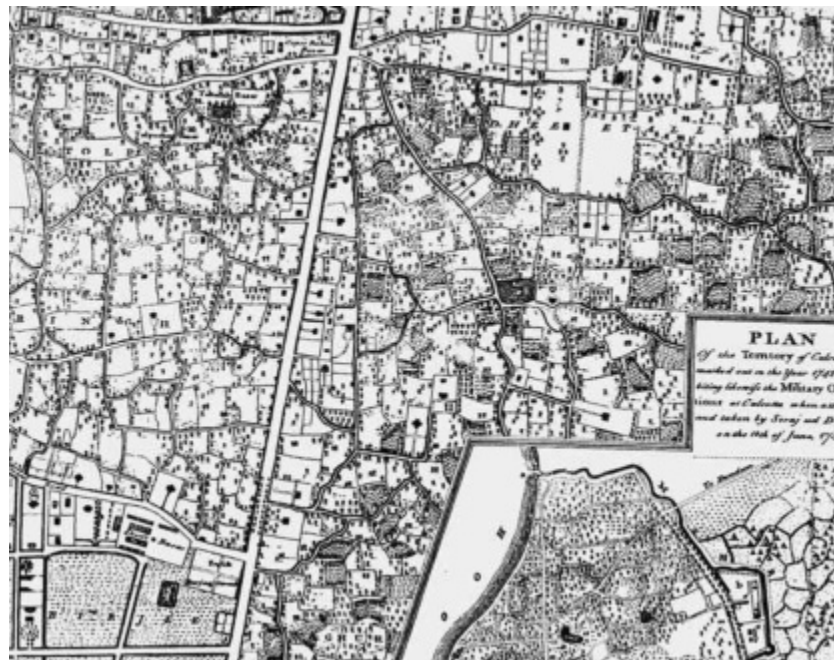


Figure 9.2
Portion of Aaron Upjohn's Map of Calcutta and its Suburbs, from a survey taken in 1792 and 1793, showing the already well-established patchwork of suburban settlement on both sides of the Circular Road.



Figure 9.3
Portion of Aaron
Upjohn's Map of Calcutta
and its Suburbs, from a
survey taken in 1792 and
1793. This image shows
the section of settlement
just above that shown in
Figure 9.2.

could have benefited from an east–west orientation to take full advantage of the river view. Garden houses, however, sometimes departed from orthogonal symmetry and a sedate classicism, to include octagonal rooms and elaborately decorated facades that signaled their role as spaces of pleasure.

Regardless of size and accommodation, property changed hands frequently, and many wealthy landlords and entrepreneurs invested in garden houses as a speculative enterprise. From this perspective there was little distinction made between garden houses in the suburbs and city residences. Since the locations of important garden houses were often indicated in maps with the names of the proprietors, we know that it was a common practice among Indians to rent and sell to Europeans and vice versa (Figure 9.4).

The Belvedere House, reputed as the most exclusive and elaborate garden house, stood on over 72 beegahs of land (Figures 9.5–9.6). Used as the residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the East India Company at the turn of the nineteenth century (when the Commander-in-Chief's residence had to be moved from the premises in Barrackpore, the latter being appropriated by the Governor General for building his "country house"), the Belvedere House changed hands several times, before being acquired by the East India Company in 1853 as the residence of the Lieutenant Governor. An 1808 advertisement provided this description:

The apartments are spacious and airy, consisting of two halls one to the Northward, measuring 46 feet by 29 feet 6 inches, one to the Southward, 30 feet 6 inches by 29 feet 6 inches; with colonnaded verandah to the North and South; the accommodation to the Eastward of the halls are an excellent bedroom to the Southward, 30 feet 6 inches by 29 feet 6 inches, a Middle or

The advertisement also noted that the outhouses were *pucka*-built, and the 72 beegahs paying a quarterly rent formed “a beautiful park, planted with clumps of trees of various descriptions,” and would make an “elegant residence for a Native of distinction.”³⁰ Aaron Upjohn’s plan of 1793 carries the impression of the above organization of space (Figure 9.7). A veranda on the east side and “a more commodious west wing” were created in 1868–9. The main northern facade with the steps were added during Sir Ashley Eden’s time (1877–82). Sir Colvin Bayley added an elegant glazed dining room to the northeast side (1887–90), and between 1890 and 1895 Sir Charles Elliot had the rooms on the upper story of the west wing constructed.³¹ Its late-nineteenth-century configuration burst the erstwhile three-bay geometry, giving the overall plan a sprawling asymmetry rare in contemporary European residences in the city center (Figures 9.8–9.10). Belvedere House’s ornamental Renaissance facade was unusual for contemporary buildings in the “white town” (Figure 9.11). It was also widely regarded as a far more “comfortable” residence than the Governor General’s mansion in the city.³²

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Figure 9.5
North facade of
Belvedere House.



Figure 9.6
South facade of
Belvedere House.

than on the house itself. Often featured in contemporary travelogues and paintings as the romantic retreat of the head of the colonial state, Barrackpore House was planned by Governor General Lord Wellesley as a magnificent mansion rivaling Government House (Figure 9.12). The grounds were laid out with "extraordinary taste and elegance," and embellished with a theater, a riding house, and with "probably the finest aviary and menagerie in the world," filled with animals and birds "collected from every quarter of the globe."³³ Its location on the Hooghly river, which allowed for a coveted exposure and view, contributed to its distinct feature – a *ghat* or stepped landing – leading directly from the premises to the river.

Despite Wellesley's plan of a large mansion, only three large rooms opening onto a veranda were completed when he left India (Figure 9.13).³⁴ The next Governor General, Sir George Barlow, had rooms added next to the veranda, thus giving the building its early-nineteenth-century form. By the time Colesworthey Grant saw Barrackpore House at mid-century, it had been further enlarged, but its simple configuration had been retained. Lord Minto, who became Governor

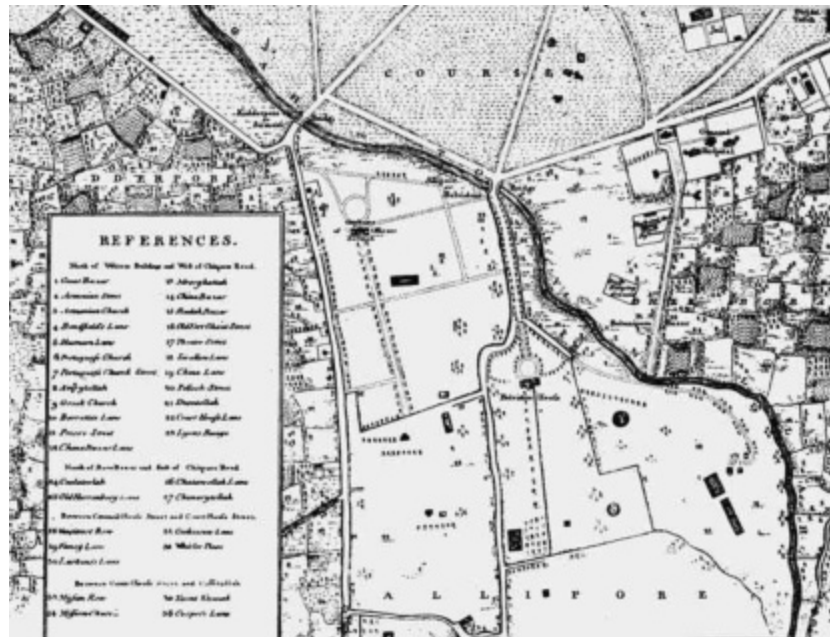


Figure 9.7
Aaron Upjohn's plan of
1792–3 showing premises
of Belvedere House.

General in 1807, was pleased that the house did not take the form envisioned by Wellesley, as it would have been a “perfect contradiction with every purpose of the place” – “it would have been to come to Calcutta from Calcutta again; and you would have the same multitude of troublesome attendants, and have lived the same full dress, intolerable life at your country house as in town.”³⁵

The notion of the garden house as a rural retreat, unfettered by obligations of city life, was probably the most commonly shared sensibility between European and Bengali elites; it was a privilege few could afford. It was the vision of the garden house as a space of conspicuous consumption of nature that assured the recognition of power over the land. The manicured natural surroundings of the garden house stood for the “country,” but its distinction from city dwelling was, as Lord Minto noted, not just about a different architectural space, but about the possibility of living according to different norms, freed from rigid official (city) protocols. Here a set of distinctions is hoisted to register the usefulness of the garden house as a rural retreat: a distinction between city and country, private pleasure and official duties, informal and formal sociability, modest dwelling and architectural grandeur. Needless to say, for those whose garden houses were their primary abodes, such distinctions did not apply. For example, indigo plantations, as both work space and residence, blurred the distinctions that came so easily to Minto's mind.

THE IMPROVED ESTATE

The most detailed rendering of an indigo plantation in Bengal is found in Colesworthy Grant's description of rural life in mid-nineteenth-century Bengal. Grant,

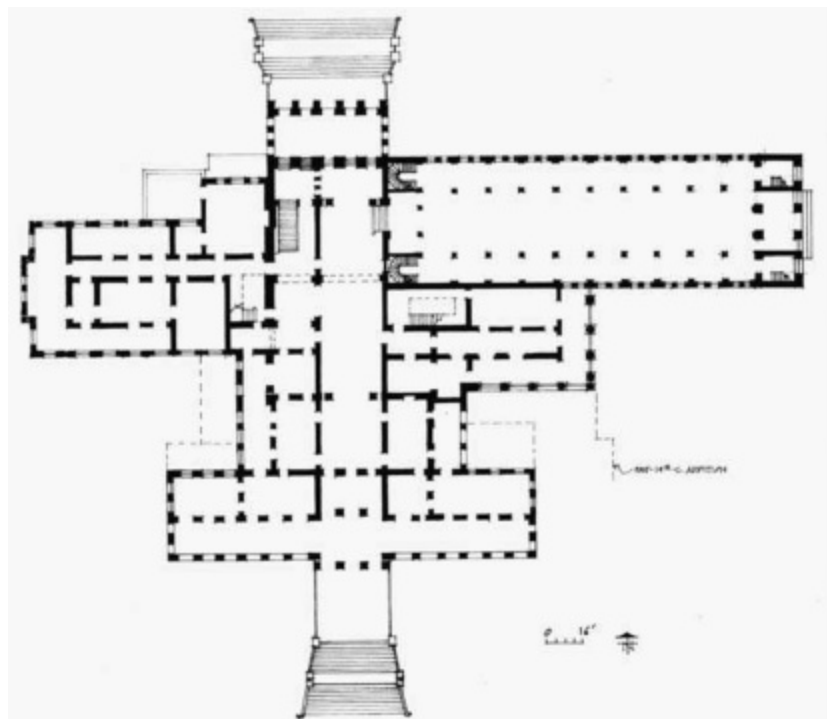


Figure 9.9
Lower floor plan of
Belvedere House.



Figure 9.10
Interior view of hall,
Belvedere House.



Figure 9.11
Portion of northern
facade of Belvedere
House, late nineteenth
century.

Revolt, thanks largely to its later resident, Robert T. Larmour, the general manager of Bengal Indigo, who acquired a reputation for being an implacable enemy of the peasants.

The Indigo Revolt began as the refusal of peasants to cultivate indigo, a crop that had no remunerative return for the peasants and, unlike rice cultivation, provided no means of subsistence. The peasants were forced by planters to take an advance for the cultivation of indigo, ensuring that they got locked in a chain of debt from which they would not recover.³⁷ Physical and sexual violence, confinement and threat of dispossession were routinely used by planters and *zamindars* to make peasants submit to the demands of production. The allied feature of coercion was considered a privilege of landlordism. Destruction of houses of the peasantry was a common tool to bring labor to heel.³⁸ The *nilkuthi* (planter's residence), like

the colonial officer's bungalow, and the *zamindar's* residence and *kachhari* (office), dominated the rural landscape as symbols of status and authority;³⁹ during the Revolt it became a hated symbol of oppression, and a salient target of peasant insurgency.⁴⁰ There were pitched battles between the retainers of the indigo planters and the villagers, the latter supported in many instances by the retainers of the *zamindars* during the Revolt.⁴¹

In view of this, it is interesting to observe the sketch of Mulnath offered by Grant. Thoroughly familiar with European residences in Calcutta and its suburbs, Grant noted his pleasure in finding out that, unlike the establishments in the former, Mulnath House, although only about 50 miles away from Calcutta, "hardly had a feature to interfere with an indulgence of the imagination of the scene as European" (Figures 9.16–9.17). The house itself was large and lavishly furnished. One

Figure 9.12
Edmund Hawke Locker,
*The Governor General's
Villa at Barrackpore*,
1808.



Figure 9.13
James Baille Fraser,
*A View of Barrackpore
House*, 1819.





Figure 9.14
Districts of Bengal
showing location of
indigo plantations.

hundred and ten feet in breadth and almost as deep, it contained 18 rooms in addition to bathrooms and dressing rooms. A range of fireplaces in the arched basement supplied hot water. But the magnificence only began with the house:

In front of the house, separated by the circular and graveled pathway, ... is a fine park, containing above seventy acres of land, wherein between twenty and thirty beautiful deer are browsing in happy security from the terrors of horn and hound Tanks, in which turkeys, geese, and ducks, seek their enjoyment, ... and well-kept broad winding paths, shaded by magnificent Tamarind and Magnolia trees, and clusters of the Bamboo, leading from the dwelling to the various lodges or gateways and out-offices, diversify the park.⁴²

To Grant, even utilitarian objects on the premises seemed transformed by the beauty of nature crafted according to superior judgment.⁴³ His narrative so tightly wove the description of the mansion and the compound with information about local agricultural produce, and the “paternal” role of the indigo planter in Bengal, that one is compelled to see the aestheticization of the landscape as a mode of demonstrating orderly and efficient agricultural production. An “improved” estate was one that looked European.

Grant undertook the elaborate exercise of establishing the indigo planter as the only figure capable of improving agricultural production (“natives” are incapable of it), and the only benefactor of the peasantry.⁴⁴ Forlong’s role in establishing a primary school and a hospital on company grounds was suggested as among the most notable benefits bestowed upon the Indian population. If it may seem that Grant is too eager to dress the European indigo planter in the attitude of the benevolent *zamindar*, who relied on a sense of feudal authority to “rule” his tenants,



Figure 9.15
Mulnath House.



Figure 9.16
Mulnath Garden.

Grant is quick to point out the distinction: unlike the native proprietor, the indigo planter is not a dealer in land, and "for the honor and glory of Zumeendarship, he cares not one fig."⁴⁵ On the contrary, indigo planters *wanted* the privileges of *zamindarship*. Robert Larmour told the Indigo Commission: "we require zemindary power to conduct our work in the moffusil"⁴⁶ – that is, the many powers of intimidation instituted within the *zamindary* system, including the power to summon a tenant to the *zamindar's kacchari* to extract rent, or to threaten rent enhancement

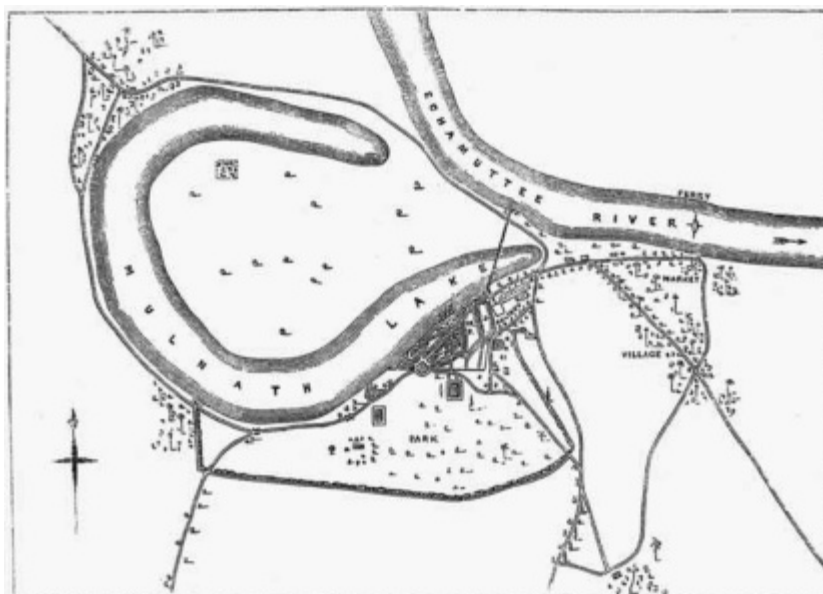


Figure 9.17
Map of Mulnath grounds.

in order to force tenants to cultivate indigo. That Grant's description of Forlong's management of the plantation would not fit this reality was not simply a function of the falsity or inconsistency of his narrative, but a structural problem inherent to the Permanent Settlement, which wavered between the models of the proprietor as a feudal lord and as an agro-capitalist. Grant hedged his argument in favor of planters by a disclaimer that from his limited experience he could not assert that the favorable environment found at Mulnath is realized everywhere – "I can only say it is so *here*, and one or two other factories I have visited ... it *should* be realised everywhere."⁴⁷ This, however, did not prevent him from making the larger claim in favor of indigo plantation, and the absolute necessity of European presence and unchallenged authority for the improvement of the Bengal countryside.

By the time Grant was writing, the whole question of European ownership of land and the cultivation of indigo had become a matter of concern for the colonial state in its bid to keep the revenue system stable and thwart political mobilization by the peasants. Grant's narrative was clearly informed by the knowledge that indigo planters were extremely unpopular among the peasantry, and indeed relied on treating tenants as bonded labor. Grant freely admitted that "no one dreams" of indigo making the poor peasant's fortune:

Poor they are, and poor they will remain, I fear, until by great moral, educational, and other changes, towards which Planters themselves are the most bound to contribute, the condition of the whole body of the people be raised, – then, indeed they may have the sense to abolish extravagances ... to understand some of the simplest principles and maxims in human affairs.⁴⁸

The poverty of the peasants then became a product of their own dissipative habits, and not a result of expropriation by planters. The failure of the peasantry

was indexed by the residences of the common people of rural Bengal, which were “more conducive to the picturesque of a drawing, than to the comfort of their inhabitants” (Figure 9.18). From this, he proceeded to generalize:

... the Bengalee appear to have little idea of comfort in common with our own; and it is perhaps the more remarkable, after being so long associated with Europeans (I speak more particularly of those in the city), that they have picked up so few notions of personal comfort or convenience in the shape of domestic furniture or utensils of the humblest character; not indeed requiring the expenditure of money so much as the application of a little ingenuity, a trifle of personal exertion, and a modicum of taste.⁴⁹

In contrast, the edifice of Mulnath House stood as an object lesson of what improvement could yield. Conspicuous consumption appears rightful and modest, the “quiet” life of the resident enhancing this impression. Neither the billiard table, nor “the rod, the gun, the turf, and chase” that form the usual recreations of most city and Moffusul gentlemen, “had any “charm” for James Forlong.⁵⁰

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

For Bengalis, as a rule, the *bagan-bari* was the secondary dwelling space, and a must for a person with any pretension to wealth. Elite Bengalis retired to garden houses during weekends for hunting, fishing, picnics and musical soirees. However, the distinction between city and country was not quite the same as the distinction between work and play. The garden house was a convenient extension of pleasurable sociality that began in the city residences of the elite.

From probate inventories we know that different furnishing, and therefore



Figure 9.18
Entrance to Mulnath
Village, showing the
house of common
peasants.

function, was assigned to the garden house as opposed to the city dwelling. The garden house, viewed predominantly as a space of male sociability, rarely accommodated spatial provision for women and the customary arrangement of private “inner compartments.” Most garden houses, designed after a three-bay pattern, precluded such distinctions.

Banymadhub Bonerjee, a lawyer who owned a business with William Henry Owen, was the proprietor of several properties in the city and suburbs. His probate, conducted in 1860, indicates that he lived in a house on 5 Theatre Road, rented out three other properties in the city, and spent his weekends in a garden house in Sultanpore, Dumdum, in the northeastern suburbs of Calcutta.⁵¹ His garden house was laid out in a three-bay pattern, and furnished more lavishly than his city dwelling. From the room names and furnishing indicated in the probate, we can infer that the lower floor of the garden house consisted of a large hall approached from the main entry, a large north room, a dining room to the east (containing an “oval wooden table” and four chairs), a “small” bedroom to the southeast that also contained a writing table and writing accessories, a bathroom, and another sitting room to the west. The hall was matted and furnished handsomely after the western fashion, with several chairs covered with crimson and yellow damask and chintz, footstools, a marble-top circular table, marble-top side tables, teapoys, a tea-caddy, pier glasses, an American clock, glass dishes, flower pots and vases, plaster of Paris figures, several large oil paintings, framed pictures, “a stereoscope,” and some books. The room was lit by several “double branch frosted wall shades,” and four Argand lamps. The large northern room was furnished in the Indian style with provision for floor seating. The floor was covered with a *suttoranchee* (light rugs), *jajeem* (large sheets), cushions and pillows, while marble-top teapoys, paintings, vases, pier glasses, and wall shades filled the peripheral space. The presence of a glass decanter in this room, and the *tashar*-fringed punkah confirm that this was the room for conversation and soirees.⁵²

The practice of lavishing resources on the garden house was common among elite Bengalis, who treated it as a site of wish images and fantasy. The painter and writer Abanindranath Tagore narrated the childhood memory of his father, Gunendranath, fitting up his garden house in Palta on the Ganga (Hooghly).⁵³ The property was vast (extending for several miles along the river), but the house itself was in a dilapidated condition when Gunendranath decided to move there permanently, after the untimely death of his youngest son. The initial garden house consisted of two central halls and a group of rooms around it. Apparently, in a matter of two months, Gunendranath, assisted by his architect Akshay Saha, had completely transformed the property. Gateways were added, new garden furniture installed, and red brick paths laid out. The old garden house became the “*baithak-khana*,” the space of male sociality, while a new building erected about 50 feet from it served as the private “inner” apartments (*andar-mahal*). A greenhouse cum aviary was constructed next to the *baithak-khana*. A large *jheel* (lake) was created next to an old banyan tree, and stocked with swans and geese. A deer park, a pasture for sheep, cows and horses, a kitchen garden and a flower garden

with exotic birds in gilt cages enlivened the premises. Beyond the gardens were playing fields and fruit orchards. Fountains, vases and sculptures were specially ordered from England, and other artifacts handpicked by Gunendranath.

Gunendranath's desire to live a life of luxury in the country was enabled by the large inheritance left by his grandfather Dwarakanath Tagore. Dwarakanath had left behind immense debts as well, and his garden house in Belgachhia, among others, had to be sold to meet his debt. But what remained was nevertheless vast, and made it utterly unimportant for the succeeding two generations to work for a living, other than sometimes overseeing property accounts. One could think of Gunendranath trying to recuperate, on an even grander scale, the family tradition of "princely" excesses. Lavish dinners hosted at Dwarakanath's garden house in Belgachhia (Figures 9.19–9.20) was, after all, the stuff of popular songs:

Belgachhiar bagane hoy chhuri kaantar jhanjhani
Khana khawar kato maja
Amra tar ki jani
Jane Thakur Company
 (Knives and forks clang at the garden of Belgachhia
 Such pleasures of dining
 We know nothing of
 Such knowledge is a privilege of Tagore Company)

The doggerel aimed at Dwarakanath, *zamindar* and co-owner of Carr Tagore Company, who hosted dinners for European society at his garden house in Belgachhia, was referring to a particular kind of consumption that was deemed problematic. The mention of "knives and forks" is meant to signal a form of exclusive entertainment given over to foreign (Western) modes of dining and sociability that had not yet acquired a grounding among common folks. The phrase distinctly marks the Tagores as those who were removed from the sensibility of the Indian masses.

By mid-century, garden houses have come to be acknowledged as spaces of pleasure and debauchery. In Kaliprasanna Sinha's classic satirical sketch of nineteenth-century Calcutta, *Hutom Penchar Naksha* (1861), the garden house is repeatedly referenced as a site of excessive consumption.⁵⁴ The critique voiced by nineteenth-century authors was not simply a moral one, but a concern with the quickness with which large landed estates accumulated by *zamindars* in the early nineteenth century were dissipated by indolent sons and grandsons when they chanced to inherit. Morality, landed wealth, economy, and patterns of conspicuous consumption were linked together to forge the image of the dissipative *zamindar*. By the late nineteenth century, Western furnishing and foreign modes of consumption garnered a distinct nationalist problematic.⁵⁵ Given over to forbidden food, foreign liquor, and prostitutes, the *zamindar* represented everything that had gone awry with Bengali society under the Permanent Settlement. In an economic climate that did not encourage entrepreneurship or investment in production, the *zamindar* personified imperfect consumption.



Figure 9.19
Simm's Map of Calcutta,
1852–6, showing the
location of Belgachhia
villa.

For Bengalis, garden houses, however, served purposes other than that of private pleasure. Until the 1870s, in the absence of theaters and public places of entertainment in the city, theaters and theater rehearsals and even sporting events took place in the spacious garden houses, under elite patronage.⁵⁶ Garden houses were rented out for all sorts of festive occasions and retreats. Keshab Sen, the Bramho reformer, rented a garden house and transformed it into a spiritual retreat for his followers. While many anecdotes about garden houses deal with the theme of conspicuous material consumption, just as many, perhaps, present the garden house experience as that of a deeply aestheticized self-discovery amid nature.



Figure 9.20
View of Belgachhia villa.

ESCAPE

The poet and novelist Rabindranath Tagore, grandson of Dwarkanath, recalled the exhilaration of leaving Calcutta for the first time on a trip to Ashutosh Deb's garden house on the Ganga in Panihati.⁵⁷ This was the Tagore family's effort to escape from the epidemic of dengue fever raging in the city. The difference between the walled-in existence of their city mansion and the openness of the Ganga made a memorable impression: "The banks of the Ganga embraced me as if she had known me in a past life."⁵⁸ And yet, Rabindranath noted that his intense desire to get to know "village Bengal," which lay immediately beyond the confines of the garden house, was thwarted by his guardians, who considered it improper for him to set out in the village, unannounced.⁵⁹

Several years later, when he abandoned a trip to Britain (and the parental expectation of his becoming a lawyer), and chose to join his older brother in the garden house at Chandannagar, it turned out to be a more fulfilling experience. He remembered the preciousness of the freedom to while away time in contemplation. The garden where they stayed was known as "Moran Saheb's bagan." Steps from the river led directly onto the wide veranda of the house. The rooms inside were at different levels, adding to the charm of the building. The circular room at the top, open on all sides, served as Rabindranath's writing space. Boat rides at sunset ended in intimate evening gatherings on the open terrace of the *baithak-khana* – the river, the sky and the garden seemed in perfect harmony. This was where he "belonged." The memories of those days were a celebration of *abasar* – time and space, beyond work.

Rabindranath chafed at the idea of turning every aspect of life into a money-making venture. The cultural cost of modernization was the very basis of Rabindranath's critique of capitalist modernity. His critique of modern institutions of the school, college and university, run according to the dictates of a colonial state, culminated in the founding of his own school, Santiniketan, amid the rural idyll of

Bolepur in the district of Birbhum. Creative passions must not be pushed by material gains, he insisted. Creative thinking required the contemplation of nature and the space and time (*abasar*) to do so.

Writing his memoirs several decades after this visit, Rabindranath noted that the river banks were now occupied by factories: "... even in our imagination the wide open comfort of the Bengal countryside has shrunk into insignificance. Everywhere in this country, business [*anabasar* – the lack of space/time] has extended its reach. Perhaps, that is just as well; but I cannot accept it as an unconditional good." It is relevant to mention here that Colesworthey Grant viewed the paper mills in Serampore next to the Ganga, set up for the Serampore Baptist Mission, as a sign of progress.

In the nineteenth-century Bengali cultural milieu, the city was an inescapable fact. Even spiritual quests were mediated by the logistics of urban culture. One such well-known story is about the spiritual encounter between the nineteenth-century Hindu saint Ramkrishna Paramhansa and the Bramho reformer Keshabchandra Sen. Ramkrishna and Keshab resided in two entirely different social worlds. Ramkrishna was a poor, illiterate man from rural Bengal with an insatiable curiosity for various religious experiences, and Keshab was born into one of the wealthy and renowned Hindu families of Calcutta. He had received a Western education and then turned to the monotheistic Bramho religion as a means of social and religious reform. Partha Chatterjee has cited the story of Ramkrishna's meeting with Keshab to explain Ramkrishna's sudden entrée into the social world of the Bengali middle class, from which he would become the middle class's most revered spiritual figure. This is how the story goes:

One day in 1875, Ramkrishna paid a visit to Keshab in his garden house in Belgharia in the outskirts of the city. Pratap Mozoomdar, a close associate of Keshab recalled: "There came one morning in a rickety *ticca gari*, a disorderly-looking young man, insufficiently clad, and with manners less than sufficient His appearance was so unpretending and simple, and he spoke so little at his introduction, that we did not take much notice of him at first" On being introduced, he said, "Babu, I am told that you people have seen God, I have come to hear what you have seen."⁶⁰ Then Ramkrishna began to talk about the nature of God, "telling his half-skeptical audience some of the stories that two decades later would become familiar to all of literate Bengal."⁶¹

Two weeks later an article on Ramkrishna and Hindu spirituality, titled "A Hindu Saint," published in the English-language newspaper *Indian Mirror*, and then followed by a similar article in the Bengali newspaper *Sulabh Samachar*, both run by Keshab, provided Ramkrishna with a critical piece of publicity: "Suddenly Ramkrishna became an object of great curiosity among the educated Bengali men of Calcutta," many of whom would become his close disciples.⁶²

Ramkrishna ceaselessly impressed upon his followers the need for detachment from worldly desires, and from the bondage of service (*chakri*) in the colonial economy. Ramkrishna taught the middle classes a language of self-identity and philosophical praxis that was fashioned from the everyday speech and practices of

the Bengali peasantry, one that was also radically opposed to Western rationalism. His own life and teachings were as far removed from the values of the garden-house owning elite as possible. Yet he himself resided in a garden house in Dakshineswar, next to the Ganga, provided by his principal patron, Rani Rashmoni. It was his residence in the garden house that made him easily accessible to his middle-class followers. These disciples would be the ones to make the teachings of Ramkrishna the very staple of a middle-class religion and a guiding light for constructing an anticolonial nationalist discourse and an unreasoning modernity.

By now it should be obvious that, when it comes to evidence, there are some important distinctions between British and Bengali sources. In British travelogues, autobiographies and maps, the garden house is carefully documented and depicted as material artifact, as evidence of successful settlement. In Bengali literature the garden house is not so much an artifact to be carefully documented; it is the versatile locus of stories and story-telling.

EXPROPRIATION

The idea of “improvement” was never an integral part of Bengali nationalist imagination, as it smacked of received foreign values, and resources spent on pursuing goals that would only benefit a colonial economy. Rather, the nationalist imperative of claiming the nation as sovereign territory turned the Bengal countryside into a deeply aestheticized vision. Its productivity, fullness and beauty had been celebrated in Bengali literature since the mid-nineteenth century, with the objective of resisting the British insinuation that native agency had failed to create a productive/aesthetic landscape in Bengal. In Bengali imagination the rural land was transformed into landscape through the mediation of the (nationalist) viewer’s adoring gaze. The distinction between city and country became entrenched in Bengali literary imagination. The city stood for constraints of a colonial economy, for subservience to foreign masters, while rural Bengal was seen as an already available locus of nationalist sensibility. The country was not yet spoilt, despite the depredations of agricultural commercialization instituted by the colonial state. Reaction to encroachment on the countryside was, therefore, strong. It was deemed as an encroachment on the very ground of nationalist imagination. Poems and novels that centered on gardens and garden houses were in effect a critique of the colonial political economy.

In his poem, “*Dui beegah jami*” (Two *beegahs* of land, 1895), which became obligatory reading for schoolchildren in post-independence Bengal, Rabindranath placed the conflict between the greedy landlord and the ordinary proprietor of land in a ruthless, romantic contrast.⁶³ Upen, whose only possession is two *beegahs* of land, is asked to sell it to the local *zamindar*, who wants the property to turn his garden into a perfect square. The *zamindar*’s purely aesthetic prerogative conflicts with Upen’s need for survival. When Upen pleads his inability to sell the land that had belonged to his forefathers, the *zamindar* brings a false charge of debt against

him. The *zamindar* produces a “decree” (Rabindranath used the English word in his Bengali verse) to appropriate Upen’s property. The “decree,” as a synecdoche, signals all the institutional and legalistic apparatus of the colonial state that worked towards the expropriation of the peasantry. A homeless Upen takes to the road. He tries to compensate for his loss, by immersing himself in the beauty of the natural world beyond the confines of his native village. But a decade and a half of wandering cannot diminish his longing for his native soil. It is his desire to return that prompts the emotive nationalist moment in the poem, with praise for the beauty of the motherland – the serenity of open fields, the soothing breeze on the banks of the Ganga, the shaded villages as little abodes of peace representing the love and comfort that only a motherland can provide. This section of the poem reads as an incantation prompted by the revelatory gaze, *darshan*, of the nationalist viewer, and is made into a quasi-religious experience. This vision is capable of a momentary transcendence of the “real” to produce an effect of deep devotion.⁶⁴ The land-grabbing *zamindar* remains a fact that Upen and Bengali thought must contend with, but the native landscape would retain the power to beckon, fulfill, and comfort.

Rabindranath, though a landlord himself, came to know village Bengal intimately in his later life, and wrote several short stories based on his experience. In the 1920s and 1930s he tried to improve the living conditions in the villages next to Santiniketan. Yet he was perfectly aware of his privileged existence, and the wide social gap between him and the common villagers, which no poetic piety could bridge. It was the result of an irreparable tragedy of circumstance. Much accused by early-twentieth-century modern Bengali writers for celebrating an elite romantic sensibility, at the cost of neglecting the prosaic struggle of the masses, Rabindranath responded: “Exiled from the laboring masses by the respect bestowed upon my position, I sit at my narrow window to the world ... I await the poet who shares his life with the peasant, and has earned his kinship with the poor, through words and deeds, ... It is not good to claim literary fame without paying the price of truth, by fashioning a fancy laborism.”⁶⁵

For Bengali writers, rural Bengal was a complex problematic. Late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century Bengali literature reveals a continual tension between the country as the last remaining originary ground for the nation’s rejuvenation, uncontaminated by foreign values, and an endangered realm devastated by the effect of the Permanent Settlement; between a backward peasantry who must be provided with the infrastructure of modern health, agriculture and representative government, and a potentially insurgent subaltern population whose energies must be channeled into an organized, elite-led nationalist movement. That the dissipative *zamindar* continued to be cast in literature, even when the *zamindari* system was on its last legs, bears testimony to the effect of the changing land relations on everyday life, as well as the lasting usefulness of the figure of the *zamindar* to tackle the sociopolitical problematic of rural Bengal.

Saratchandra Chattopadhyay, who parted with Rabindranath on the question of the direction of nationalist agitation, presented Bengali literature with one

of the most memorable images of the corrupt *zamindar*. His novel, *Denapawona* (Debt Transaction, 1922), begins with the *zamindar*, Jibanananda Chowdhury, suddenly appearing in the village of Chandigarh, on the pretext of overseeing his estate. Jibanananda's grandfather had a "bungalow" built in this village, on the Barui river, because of its reputation as a healthy locale.⁶⁶ The bungalow was named "*Santikunja*" – the garden of peace – and was tastefully set up. Jibanananda had never set foot in the village before. Living off the wealth accumulated by his grandfather, he relies on selling off his estate to procure money for his pleasures. Jibanananda exemplifies the absentee *zamindar* – he has no interest in improving the land and harbors no concern for his tenants. On arrival, he matter-of-factly demands ten thousand rupees from rent, a daily supply of meat, and women.

The story gathers momentum when his demands are resisted by the village priestess, Soroshi. The priestess has a loyal following among the poor and low castes, and has made enemies of the upper-caste men in the village, as she is unwilling to let them expropriate land belonging to the temple. The first meeting between the priestess and the *zamindar*, when she is brought as a captive to the *zamindar's* bungalow, is remarkable for its portrayal of inappropriate consumption:

The room was dirty, and had the stench of liquor. A large number of bottles of various descriptions were scattered about. A couple of daggers hung from the wall behind the bed. A rifle was leaning in a corner. On a broken teapoy, close at hand, were two pistols. Not very far, in the front verandah, a dead animal's carcass was hanging from the ceiling; once in a while its terrible smell assaulted the senses. It appeared as if a fox had been shot shortly before – it was still lying on the floor in a pool of blood. The *zamindar* was resting on the bed reading a book; another fat volume serving as a candle stand Seemingly, in the absence of a bed sheet, an expensive shawl was spread on the bed, much of it dragging on the floor. A half-smoked cheroot was left resting on a valuable gold clock; a thread of smoke still lingered from it. Underneath the bed the presence of a silver plate with some leftover bones suggested that it has been lying there since morning. In the place of a towel, a *zari*-bordered *dhakai* shawl has been used to wipe hands.⁶⁷

The overdetermined setting depicts Jibanananda as having mastered all the sins of the *zamindar* and all the ills of city life. He is addicted to alcohol, sex and violence. Worse, his misuse of valuable articles of clothing and household objects speaks of the absence of any recognition of value.

Saratchandra was not the first Bengali author who made such a direct correlation between material culture and moral attributes. For middle-class authors like Saratchandra, household objects resonated with a view of socioeconomic relations in which judicious consumption was the key to morality and prosperity. Jibanananda is not the *zamindar* who lives in a luxurious mansion studded with riches. It makes no difference to him that the garden house is in ruins. He smacks of city life, but is in truth not rooted in either city or country – often wanted by the police for petty crimes, he moves from place to place, and upsets the fragile distinction between rural Bengal and colonial city cherished in middle-class Bengali imagination. Jibanananda merely retains the violent vestiges of the *zamindar's* repertoire – he has become a pure instrument of expropriation. Here the garden house and the

city are homologous; they operate as centers in the web of expropriation of the peasantry; they are dangerous spaces that lie beyond the moral capacity of rural folks.

It is interesting that it is in the 1920s that we find the depiction of a *zamindar* that perfectly corresponds with the problematics of the garden house in Bengali middle-class imagination. Around the aberrant figure of the *zamindar*, one could formulate all that plagued village Bengal – the unholy combination of landed interests and traditional religious and caste oppression. These had become the active ingredients of a new political scene in which the nationalist leadership found itself obligated to engage the support of the rural masses.

The novel ends in a great moral lesson: the *zamindar* adopts the burden of responsibility towards his subjects (tenants), undertaking “improvement” projects, once the nature of the injustice faced by the poor subjects is revealed to him by Soroshi. This is, of course, not totally unexpected. The critique is shaped by a middle-class sensibility, and propelled by the desperate belief that socioeconomic stability will be achieved once the *zamindar* begins to acknowledge his debt to the peasantry – his “subjects.” That this reversal of socioeconomic expectations, and the redemption of the *zamindar*, must occur within a conception of feudalistic paternalism is significant, and is perhaps a testimony to both the legacy of the Permanent Settlement – the quasi-feudal social relations that it kept alive – and the contradiction around the concept of private property that it supported, as much as it is about the need to negotiate those contradictions amid the politics of the day.

CONCLUSION

The characterizations of the garden house I have provided – as spaces of conspicuous consumption, escape and expropriation – are three moments in the history of the garden house, even when there were significant overlaps among these images and moments. Residing on the experiential fringes of the common folks, in Bengali popular imagination, the garden house had always been a liminal space of unreason, of unexpected encounters with the other. It had been the mediator between city and country, explicating the contradictions of a colonial economy and culture. As the counterface of primitive accumulation within an increasingly anti-colonial nationalist environment, it did not simply represent the dominance of the city over the country, but it was a venue through which rural Bengal cast a deep influence on city culture.

The *zamindari* system was abolished in 1953, following independence from British rule. The middle class in the city and a new group of rentier class in the country had usurped power from the *zamindar*; the garden house now could be consigned to the realm of the past. And yet the dilapidated garden houses and the figure of the *zamindar* continued to tug at Bengali literary imagination. Now, in the mid-twentieth century, garden houses were one of the few remaining places where the past could be apprehended, even if in its ghostly form, amid the rapidly changing landscape of both city and country. Indeed, garden houses became the

most wonderful sites of ghost stories. A number of short stories by Lila Majumdar – “*Peneti'te*” (In Peneti), “*Bhuture Bari*” (The Haunted House) – narrate hilarious encounters with the spirits of old residents.⁶⁸ Once the houses had been emptied of their original rationale, depleted of their authority, they could be refashioned as sites of unfulfilled desires. In garden houses one's wishes, mediated by ghosts, could still come true.

Chapter 10: The Trouser under the Cloth

Personal Space in Colonial-Modern Ceylon

Anoma Pieris

THE CENTER OF DISPLAY

In 1870, when Queen Victoria's son Alfred visited Colombo, Ceylon, Charles Henry de Soysa, a philanthropist and entrepreneur, hosted the royal banquet. It was held at his mansion, Bagatelle House, in the elite suburb of Colombo – Cinnamon Gardens. The name of the house was later changed to "Alfred House" in honor of the royal visitor, while the gold plate, cup and jeweled cutlery used by the prince were handed down in that family for generations. The event was controversial because the British had picked a social upstart from the insignificant *Karave* (fisher caste), and offered him the greatest honor possible under their administration. It was most disturbing to the *Govigama* (farmer caste), who, being the established feudal elite, represented and took part in the administration of the indigenous population. Although the *Govigama* clans were invited to the banquet, they were not offered places at the prince's table. The description of the banquet, the decoration of the streets, and the entertainment provided in the house and garden were detailed in a family history, the *De Soysa Charitaya* by Don Bastian (who was commissioned to write it in 1904).¹ It was an effort by the *Karave* caste to assert their social position among the Sinhalese by extolling the virtues of its leaders and illustrating their prowess. The tale, retold, gathered apocryphal data and attempted to assert *Karave* authority by exploiting themes familiar to the Sinhalese caste system. Who was this "Charles de Soysa" and how had he gained such enviable social status?

The opportunity for such self-aggrandizement by an otherwise marginal caste occurred because of the meteoric rise of the *Karave* within the colonial social structure. The individualistic structure of the market economy under British administration (1815–1948) had animated the commercial opportunism of specific indigenous caste groups who readily invested in colonial opportunities, particularly in trade and plantations.² Previously marginalized by the rigid indigenous *corvée* system, these castes had converted easily to Christianity (predominantly

Catholicism), allied themselves with British industries, and found opportunities for social mobility based on numerous creative affiliations.³ Whereas groups of subcontinental migrants had always assimilated at the periphery of the island's caste system, colonial enterprise carved economic and social tributaries that opened up its new administration to subsequent generations. Marginality proved advantageous, giving them the freedom to negotiate their identities and move easily across the binaries of the colonial predicament. Yet it was also precarious, marking them as opportunists who had conceded to an anglicized value system by concealing their own insecurities. The ambivalence of their stance between colonial and national loyalties was, interestingly, embodied in their mode of dress, "the trouser under the cloth," which was prescribed to them by the colonial administration.

The "trouser under the cloth," *Samayata Kalisama*, was adopted during the late colonial period for/from the official regalia of the native component of the colonial administration. It was a hybrid garment, which consisted of a trouser wrapped in a short cloth. Where initially the short cloth was a sign of deference to the authority of the trouser, it was ultimately useful for concealing or revealing Western aspirations. It was worn by the *Samayata Mahattaya*, the "gentleman under the cloth," who left his parochial provincial beginnings to join the ranks of the anglicized urban elite in the colonial capital. This journey was marked by specific physical and social transformations that demonstrated the growing cultural confidence of new bourgeois elements across ethnic groups, whether Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim or Burgher. These changes were pronounced in the case of the *Karave*.

This essay uses the metaphor of the "trouser under the cloth" to describe the dialectical appropriation of Eastern and Western values that marked bourgeois self-fashioning during the colonial period. It also suggests that resultant contradictory or hybrid expressions that persisted post-Independence had their roots in processes of elite formation in the private sphere. It uses the biography of a *Karave* family, the *De Soysa Charitaya*, mentioned previously, as its primary resource as well as colonial records of the period. Michael Roberts's *Caste Conflict and Elite Formation: The Rise of a Karave Elite in Sri Lanka*, provides an excellent analysis of the de Soysa family's motivations and their impact on colonial society, on which the present essay relies significantly.⁴ This essay can be interpreted as an effort to amplify Roberts's arguments by examining the material conditions of bourgeois self-fashioning in dress and architecture.

In Ceylonese society, adjustments in lifestyle and dress preceded changes in the built environment that expanded the politics of personal space (as opposed to public space) to residential architecture. The unparalleled freedom afforded the private domain made it exemplary in this regard, and enabled the rapid ascent of the colonial bourgeoisie across social classes. Economic opportunity and individualism contributed to a dynamic social landscape where both "Western" and "Eastern" identities were being appropriated. Within the confines of this brief essay, we will focus on the ultimate site of these negotiations; the colonial capital, Colombo.

A CAPITAL CITY

Michael Roberts *et al.* observe that by the early twentieth century Colombo had grown to be a “primate city,” the center of political and financial deals within the island, its principal port, and an arena for display.⁵ Indeed the city was impressive. It consisted of a commercial center of imposing Victorian and Neoclassical buildings linked by continuous arcades built under the auspices of the colonial Public Works Department. Residential suburbs surrounded the city, connected by a network of roads extending like tentacles from this city center. This was a period when sprawling colonial bungalows occupied large acreages of land, asserting the grandeur of the colony’s European residents. Since Colombo had been the product of consecutive colonial administrations, it had no indigenous features to interrupt its urban character, and proved an ideal site for nurturing both physical and social forms of gentrification.

The groups that predominated in the colonial city were the British residents, the Burghers (descendants of Dutch and Portuguese colonists), and elite families from indigenous ethnic communities, including Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims. From among them, the Burghers were afforded privileged positions in the colonial administration but were ambiguous in their attitudes towards it, providing support and opposition. As a group situated “in between” colonizing and colonized cultures they functioned as interpreters of European values.⁶ Gentrification of the local elite initially proceeded through imitation, and cautious local aspirants to elite status would appropriate Burgher lifestyles and dwellings.

By the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, colonial-style residential architecture grew to represent new colonial elite groups educated in missionary colleges and socialized into colonial manners. Bevis Bawa, a popular social columnist of the post-Independence era, reflected sarcastically,

[T]he last generation were magnificent in their grandeur. They memorized the facades of vast houses they saw all over Europe, returned and built them on acres of land they or their fathers had owned in the city. Houses like Gothic churches, Victorian wedding cakes ... There was no question of being nationalistic in those days. Most people were for the ways of the West and some secretly wished they were from it.⁷

The vulgar opulence suggested by Bawa’s comment was an expression of newly acquired wealth and a consequence of intense competition. The scale of both property and house, the elaborate decorations and the adoption of Western “styles” pointed to the seriousness with which colonial social positions were being constructed. Property ownership, urban residence and architectural expressions of social status were relatively new commodities generated by British strategies of urban expansion. Moreover their economic availability to all indigenous groups, irrespective of race or caste, signified the closure of indigenous social hierarchies and the opening up of a new field for contestation. Competition was most fierce between the established elite groups and a few marginal groups within the Sinhalese caste system.

British occupation had resulted in three significant changes in Ceylon's indigenous social structure, which inform this analysis. First, in 1815, following the fall of Kandy, the last indigenous capital, the *Radala* caste (royal courtiers), who were aspirants to the Kandyan throne, were removed from positions of authority. The *Govigama*, or Low Country Elite, who were based in coastal areas and lowlands, were appointed in their stead. The *Govigama* gained considerably from their colonial alliances, converted to Christianity and initiated the process of gentrification. They presented the strongest opposition to the rise of marginal caste groups such as the *Karave*. Their equivalent among the Tamil community was the *Vellalas* (farmers), who were afforded similar social opportunities by the colonial administration.⁸ Second, the dissolution of the *Radala* elite was followed in 1833 by the abolishing of the rigid *corvée* system. This system, known as *Rajakariya*, was based on service to the monarch and, unlike in India, came with no religious or dietary restrictions. Third, the system of compulsion and customary law was replaced by the court-based legal system. Land became an easily transferable commodity, available to all sectors of the population.⁹

Although caste identities associated with the *corvée* system continued to exist, lower-caste groups were able to transgress social boundaries and rise through economic rather than feudal associations. Marginalized castes such as cinnamon peelers, toddy tappers, or fisher/carpenters, who benefited from colonial industry, rose rapidly in the ranks of the caste system. It enabled the *Karave*, who had the eleventh rank during the fifteenth century, to rise to second position by 1824.¹⁰ The elite of every racial group eventually found their way to Colombo, where prestige was acquired through complex structures of assimilation. Cinnamon Gardens, the residential quarter of the city of Colombo, became the primary arena for social display and the construction of palatial mansions; elegant dress and extravagant wedding receptions all became a part of status competition.¹¹ Conspicuous consumption for symbolic purposes, which was rooted in traditional village practice, was "played out" using Western forms and artifacts.¹²

Arnold Wright's *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon* offers a testament to this process. Published in 1907 by Lloyds Greater Britain Publishing Company as part of a series on British colonies, it afforded a commercial opportunity for substantiating social position.¹³ It became a source book for elite status, with families paying to be included in the volume and providing favorable descriptions of their wealth. Their anglicized Christian names, names of houses, dress and architecture reveal the extent of their westernization. Descriptions provided by the *Karave* elite are prominent among them.

Like many coastal caste communities, the *Karave* were recent migrants (thirteenth–eighteenth centuries) who had become indigenous through assimilation into Sinhalese society at the margins of the caste structure. Their location on the coastal belt involved them in maritime trade and exposed them to colonial influences and opportunities. During Portuguese and Dutch rule over the maritime areas, they were able to function as middlemen in the supply of areca nuts and cinnamon, perform *lascarin* (military) services, and involve themselves in the

construction of Dutch buildings.¹⁴ They converted to Catholicism under the Portuguese as early as 1556, when 70,000 converts were enumerated. On conversion each individual would be given the last name of the baptizing priest, such as Perera, Pieris, Fernando, de Soysa and de Silva. They would adopt Portuguese clothes and language. Under the British, many would convert to become Anglicans and Methodists.¹⁵ Religious conversion gave the *Karave* access to colonial education, while their artisan–craftsman background gave them ideas of capital accumulation and entrepreneurship. Their investments were largely in *arrack* farms (locally brewed spirits), coffee holdings, import/export establishments, coconut plantations. By the turn of the century they dominated the tea and rubber cultures. Judicious marriage and landed property strengthened their position within the caste structure. They lived as concentrated communities in coastal towns, such as Moratuwa, the first town south of Colombo, creating caste solidarity and support systems. The association between boatbuilding and carpentry that resulted in the prevalence of this skill in Moratuwa enabled the community to establish themselves through their built environment.¹⁶

These associations are enumerated in a paragraph on “A Native Philanthropist – The late Charles Henry de Soysa (1836–1890)” in *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*.¹⁷ A range of institutions built by him in Colombo and in Moratuwa can be loosely classified as medical, educational and religious establishments based on Western models. For example, in Colombo, Charles de Soysa built the De Soysa Lying-in Home and the Bacteriological Institute, and gifted the Alfred Model Farm; in Moratuwa, he built the Holy Emmanuel Church and Prince and Princess of Wales Colleges. British architects were commissioned to design the buildings in Victorian, neo-Gothic or Indo-Saracenic styles, with plans and elevations closely modeled on British examples. A team of carpenters from Moratuwa typically executed the buildings. Their renowned skills would take one of them to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London (in 1886).¹⁸ In Moratuwa, the Prince and Princess of Wales Colleges were so named (in 1875) in honor of the visit of Edward, Prince of Wales; they educated generations of men and women who would serve the city’s bureaucratic institutions. In honor of his philanthropic contribution, a statue of Charles de Soysa was erected “by a grateful public” in the city of Colombo at a rotary known as “De Soysa Circus.”

Charles de Soysa founded the Moratuwa Cooperative Company and Ceylon Agricultural Society, and was actively involved in petitions for the elective principle. An organizers’ meeting held to protest against the Village Communities Ordinance of 1871 brought over two hundred prominent people from various parts of the Western province to his home (*walawwa*) in Moratuwa.¹⁹ In fact it was this tight-knit caste consciousness that, paradoxically, communicated Western, Christian and educational values among the *Karave*. They were conspicuous in smaller replications of the colonial bungalow and mansion, which dotted the western coastline wherever *Karave* communities had settled.

Although the individualistic free market diffused caste-based hierarchies and economies, it intensified caste rivalry among Colombo’s elite. The colonial

government occasionally contributed to this aggravation, as in the example of the royal banquet, mentioned previously. The *Govigama*'s high social standing was officially acknowledged, and seldom overlooked in such a manner. For example, a form of dress etiquette for native headmen (Mudaliyers, Muhandirams, Arrachies and Canganies) had been institutionalized along caste lines, and clearly indicated the ranking favored by the government. The superior status of the *Govigama* headmen was signified by velvet costumes adorned with gold buttons and loops, whereas headmen of other castes had to wear silk and silver buttons.²⁰ These costumes were further displayed through elaborate urban processions that ensured the maximum publicity for each individual.

When Charles de Soysa's father, Jeronis, was appointed a *Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate*, the exaggerated grandeur of his costume was, no doubt, directed at the *Govigama* elites who had opposed his appointment. Over his coat, Jeronis wore a chain of 150 sovereigns, a sword encased in an elaborately chased silver scabbard inlaid with gold, the sword hilt a mass of gems, and he was taken in an elaborate procession from Grandpass in Colombo all the way to Moratuwa, twelve miles away.²¹ The noise and color of the procession, the decoration of the streets, and the festivities in Moratuwa suggest that the *Karave* seized upon this opportunity for social display.

The official regalia prescribed for "natives" appointed by the British as public officials was a long coat with a "trouser under the cloth" (Figure 10.1). We may assume that the half-cloth was initially used to delimit the authority of local administrators. Gradually, however, the costume penetrated private space as a symbol of gentrification. Often, provincial aspirants to gentleman status would attach trouser legs to the bottom of a short cloth in order to reduce its encumbrance.

THE PRIVATE DOMAIN

Owing to the public limitations on costumes and customs imposed on the indigenous elite, their private domain became a field for intense experimentation. Elite women in particular, being excluded from public life, imitated Victorian gentlewomen. Weddings became an occasion for the public display of private life, and elite families began to compete in the field of fashion.²² In 1863, when Charles Henry de Soysa married Catherine de Silva, she was the first bride from Moratuwa to wear an English-style dress for her wedding. When C. S. Fernando married the daughter of Andris Silva a year later, "only a Paris trousseau was good enough for the bride."²³

It was in the area of private life that the Sinhalese elite was best able to match the pomp and pageantry of the British administration. A grand wedding offered static and dynamic opportunities for spatializing a family's wealth and status. The wedding procession traveled to and from the church, gathering crowds of spectators and well-wishers. The number of carriages was noted and reported in the London newspapers. The decoration of the marquee in the garden of the *walawwa*, and the many-tiered wedding cake that often acquired architectural

proportions, provided spectacular opportunities for innovation. The jewelry and bridal attire, the food and entertainment, and the number of days taken by the festivities were quantified, compared and competed over.

When Charles's son Thomas Henry Arthur married Regina Perera of Galle (a Southern provincial town), the wedding was reported in the "prestigious" London *Daily Graphic* of 2 March 1899 as follows:

Closenburg the picturesque residence of Francis Perera the bride's brother was the scene of the wedding. The marriage was solemnized at All Saints Fort Galle in the presence of an unprecedented gathering A magnificent Landau drawn by six white thoroughbreds was the vehicle in which the couple left after the ceremony in church. This spectacle attracted thousands of people ... Bedecked with festoons and bunting was the entire route from Colombo to Galle, a distance of 72 miles ... the *Magul Maduwa* [wedding tent] at the spacious grounds of the de Soysa *walawwa* in Moratuwa was the cynosure of all eyes ... all the residents of Moratuwa were entertained there for a week in anticipation of the marriage.²⁴

The apparent ease with which Sinhalese women adopted Western dress and manners was not surprising in the case of Christian converts. With the initial conversion under Portuguese rule, women were most likely to adopt the Portuguese blouse and skirt. It is possible that the church saw the "native" dress for women (a cloth wrapped around the waist with or without a blouse) as immodest. Men, in



Figure 10.1
The "trouser under the cloth" worn here by Louis Pieris.

contrast, deferred to the colonizer by continuing to wear a sarong and coat borrowed from Malay custom. Paradoxically, but for the same reasons, the language of communication among men shifted to English, while women conversed in the vernacular or Portuguese during the early part of the British period.²⁵

During the late colonial period, however, the freedom of the private domain, the ease of land transfer and the intensity of social display gave greater prominence to architecture as the avenue for self-expression. When we study the residences bought, copied or built by local elites, the absence of delimiting hierarchies or administrative classifications is most apparent. Architecture provided an open field for competing caste groups, facilitated by the clear separation of public and private domains by the colonial government. As in the case of female attire, the private house of the aspiring gentleman presented no threat to colonial authority and was available for extensive experimentation.

The *Karave* embraced colonial opportunities for property ownership with enthusiasm, and by the turn of the century had houses scattered throughout the island. Charles de Soysa owned forty-eight houses in the city of Colombo alone, several in Kandy, and one on each of his numerous plantations. The grandest of these was decorated according to Victorian taste, with an overabundance of furniture. His will, which is a testament to his material wealth, enumerates the introduction to Ceylonese life of calamander davenports, satinwood lounges, dressing tables, marble-top tables, tamarind almirahs, calamander writing tables, settees and teapoys, hanging lamps, pictures and cabinets. It also includes a number of carriages, phaetons and landaus. De Soysa bred horses and owned elephants.²⁶ The most exemplary artifacts of his social ascent were his houses.

THE DE SOYSA HOUSES

The genealogy of the de Soysa residences begins with a small house in Moratuwa, the home of Joseph de Soysa, Charles's grandfather. A photograph in the *De Soysa Charitaya* shows a small, undecorated cottage of not more than two or three rooms with a narrow veranda in front (Figure 10.2). An adobe plinth and slender timber columns suggest the style typical of a simple village house found throughout the island. At the time of the photograph the gable roof had half-round tiles, which were introduced to the island by the Portuguese as a more durable alternative to thatched cover.

Joseph's son, Jeronis, wedded Francesca Coorey and added a second building to his father's cottage, elevating it to a building complex in the style of a *walawwa*.²⁷ The *walawwa* was a large residence reserved for the headman of a village, and signified his importance in the village social structure. It usually consisted of a cluster of buildings linked by verandas, and often included a courtyard space, which isolated the private life of the family from the headman's numerous public duties. *Walawwa* furniture would be simple, built in timber and rattan, without upholstery, and the veranda space would be the primary area of habitation. Although the traditional *walawwa* was originally associated with the homes

of the *Radala* (courtiers), who had been members of the royal court in Kandy, it was displaced by colonial equivalents following the dissolution of their authority by the British.

Martin Wickramasinghe, a prominent Sinhalese novelist of the 1930s, described the *walawwa* as a massive house in a bucolic setting, the embodiment of the ancient lineage and the “unbending” character of its owners. In short, it had withstood colonization, unchanged. He wrote,

The great ancient house has withstood the ravages of sun, rain, wind and time with an enduring strength far better than a house built in present days. The lintels and walls that have confronted these forces so long, solid, unshaken, reveal ample evidence of their ravages.²⁸

By appropriating its architectural form, bourgeois entrepreneurs like Jeronis de Soysa acquired the trappings of a provincial headman, befitting his status as a leader of the *Karave* community and *Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate*. He maintained his *walawwa* as a country residence, even after his move to Colombo and consequent westernization. Photographs of Jeronis reinforce this identity, showing an elderly man attired in a provincial headman's garb – a sarong and coat – with his hair tied in a knot at the back of the head and pierced with a large comb. Undoubtedly his move to the westernized urban capital called for considerable cultural adjustment. This was achieved by purchasing colonial bungalows that had been built for and had once housed Burgher gentlemen or colonial officials. Among them were Brodie House, Selby House, Duff House and Caldecott House. Among the former owners, John Selby was the Queen's Advocate and Caldecott was a British official. The buildings were unassuming single-story structures with long verandas and brick colonnades, which provided exterior living spaces very similar to the rural *walawwas*. Although we have no detailed plans for the de Soysa residences, we can assume they were typical colonial bungalows of that period.²⁹

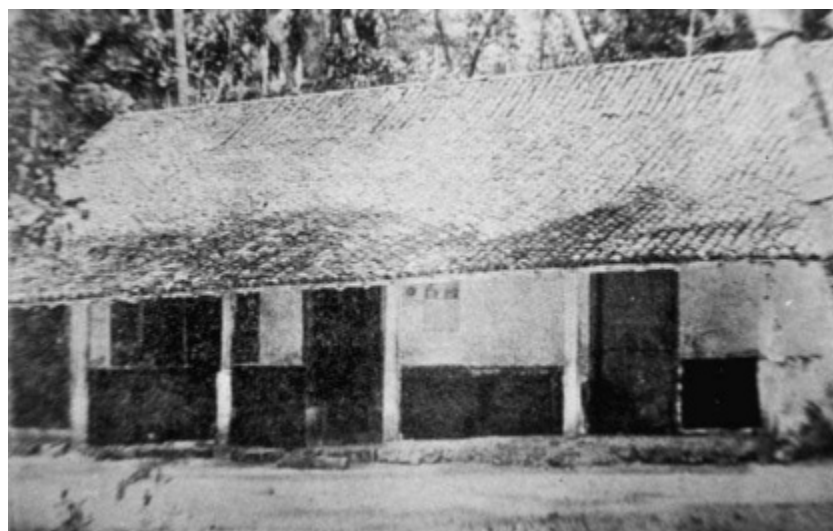


Figure 10.2
The de Soysa *Walawwa* in
Moratuwa.

The move from *walawwa* to bungalow signaled the owner's entry into an anglicized bourgeois class, along with its processes of individuation. This was evident in the shift from the flexible use of spaces in the former to spatially separated activities, furnished accordingly, in the latter. Both the Dutch and the British bungalows had an interior, more private, *salé* or hallway flanked by bedrooms, in addition to a veranda. The British model used a grand archway to divide this space into discrete living and dining spaces. Its form and construction materials were also more complex. *Kabuk* (laterite) walls were replaced by masonry construction; a porch was added in front for carriages; and an office room, on one side of the veranda, called for hips and bays in a simple gable roof structure.

The divisive character of the British bungalow interior reflected concomitant racial divisions in public and private life that had penetrated domestic environments. The kitchen and bathrooms were separated from the main house owing to rudimentary services, in terms of plumbing or sewerage, and the use of soot-generating wood stoves. Such divisions also separated "native" servants from their colonial masters. In the bungalows owned by the Sinhalese elite they functioned as dividers between those who had embraced Western culture and those who were excluded from it. As their pretensions increased, and needs and spaces multiplied, the colonial mansion replaced the bungalow.

Norma Evenson observes that (in India) by the late nineteenth century, a distinction was being made between bungalows and mansions, with the latter considered more appropriate for Residencies and closer to the English model.³⁰ She attributes the first generation of colonial Neoclassical mansions to the introduction and influence of the Palladian villa in England.³¹ Apart from its expansion to accommodate the multiplication of Victorian social habits, it was designed to attract public attention. Moreover, the eclectic spaces of its interior announced the extravagant lifestyle afforded by lavish decoration. Benedict Anderson observes that the colonial context

... permitted sizeable numbers of bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to play aristocrat off centre court: i.e. anywhere in the empire except at home. In each colony one found this grimly amusing *tableau vivante*: the bourgeoisie *gentilhomme* speaking poetry against a backcloth of spacious mansions and gardens filled with mimosa and bougainvillea, and a large supporting cast of house boys, grooms, gardeners, cooks, amahs, maids, washerwomen, and above all horses.³²

The desire to demonstrate his virtuosity in his new environment likewise drove Jeronis de Soysa, in 1857, to shift his interest from colonial bungalows to Bagatelle House at the heart of Cinnamon Gardens. It was "a magnificent mansion" built around 1822 by Charles Edward Layard, the father of C. P. Layard (1828–79), Colombo's first mayor (Figure 10.3).³³ It was named *Bagatelle* after a game played on a table having a semicircular end and nine numbered holes. Balls were struck from the further end with a cue.³⁴ Bagatelle House became the property of Jeronis's son Charles de Soysa and was known among the *Karave* as *Bagatelle Walawwa*. Following its choice as the venue for the royal banquet, the property was renamed Alfred House. Today, road names such as Alfred House Gardens,

Charles Circus and Bagatelle Road describe the perimeters of the original de Soysa property.

As described in the *De Soysa Charitaya*, Bagatelle House or Alfred House was a large two-story mansion set in a parkland of 120 acres, modeled upon an English manorial residence. The grounds included orchards, pastures, flower gardens and a carriage house. A farm with poultry, pigs and cattle and milking sheds was located on the premises and provided food for the large household living at the mansion. There were also stalls for rearing deer and several types of birds as pets for the children.³⁵

The house itself was a long rectangular building of classical proportions, with a colonnade at the ground-floor level. In an urban plan of the property from the early twentieth century, the original building seems to have been extended by the de Soysa family, although architectural plans of the building are unavailable. The multiplication of living spaces, including drawing room, reception halls, verandas and rest rooms, suggest that separate rooms were reserved for receiving specific classes of people. Undoubtedly in a colonial society different degrees of courtesy were extended to British officials, friends and relatives and to dependents and servants.

A chrome lithograph by Vincent Day, taken from a photograph by Slimm and Co., Colombo, best communicates the grandeur of the Alfred House interior (Figure 10.4).³⁶ The photograph shows a paneled hall with high ceilings and transomed doorways, containing heavy pieces of furniture. The floor is richly carpeted and several ornate chandeliers hang from the ceiling, while the windows and doors are draped with curtains. A giant pair of elephant tusks at the entrance helps us identify the room as the entrance hall described in the *De Soysa Charitaya*. Two figures, Jeronis de Soysa (seated) and Charles de Soysa (standing), are depicted in the painting. The furniture is said to have been carved according to Italian

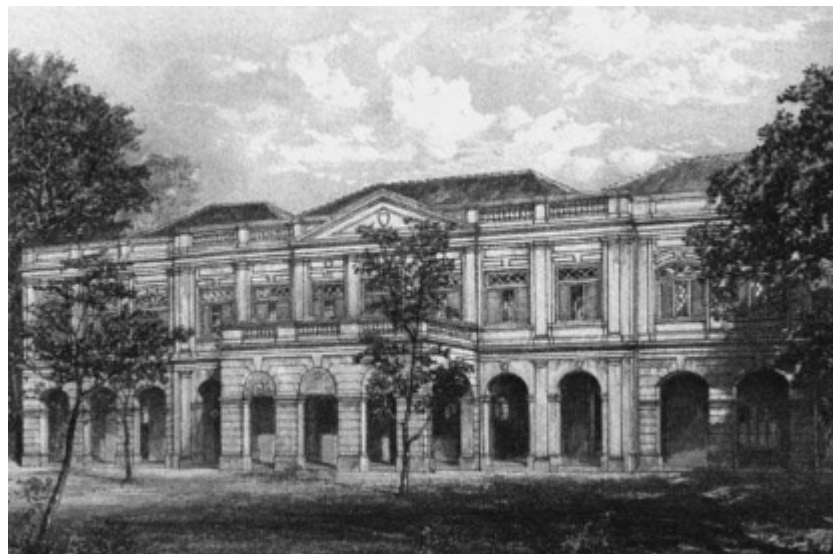


Figure 10.3
Alfred House, formerly
known as Bagatelle
House.



Figure 10.4
Interior of Bagatelle
House.

designs with marble tops, richly upholstered chairs and gold-embroidered cushions. The account enumerates maps, mirrors, flower vases, photographs, glass hanging lamps, chandeliers, valuable paintings and richly woven carpets. Monogrammed crockery and cutlery completed the details of Victorian life, where a surfeit of material objects signified the cultured gentleman.

In addition to reception rooms, the description in the *De Soysa Charitaya*, of a library, study halls and rooms for collections of art and gifts and trophies suggests that the de Soysa family were educating themselves in Western art and culture. The appropriation of British life was also facilitated by the employment of British butlers and governesses, who lodged at the adjacent Duff House (set apart from the servants' quarters). They educated the fourteen children in colonial habits, and into gentlemen and gentlewomen.³⁷ Charles sent his sons to leading boys' schools in Colombo and on to England for further studies. For example, his eldest son J. W. C. de Soysa took both his BA and MA at Trinity Hall, Cambridge.³⁸ On their return, the sons joined their father in running the family plantations. Daughters of the family entered into marriages, arranged according to the desires of the parents, with promising young professionals from among the ranks of the *Karave*.

It is important to note that (as recorded by Arnold Wright),³⁹ the conspicuous display of wealth and westernization was not confined to the *Karave* clan but also occurred among the *Govigama* and other Sinhalese castes, as well as Tamils, Muslims and Burghers. By the turn of the century, competition between elite groups had reached new heights and ridiculous proportions. Colombo's mansions grew more elaborate, with numerous towers and turrets in reference to the heraldry associated with manor houses in England. Just as the *walawwa* had once legitimized the aspiring provincial gentry, Colombo's elite looked for validation through a superfluous imitation of the English gentry, naming their houses Ells Court, High Cliff Hall, Fin Castle or Hill Castle.

SEEDS OF NATIONALISM

It was at a period when the anglicization of Ceylonese elites was at its height that a new and rebellious spirit made its first appearance. A small group of cultured Burgher gentlemen conceived of an anticolonial Ceylonese identity influencing the westernized indigenous elites.⁴⁰ Nationalism was, paradoxically, nurtured amidst conflicting Western aspirations. These confusing negotiations of identity were manifested in private institutions such as the Orient Club, Colombo, where membership was exclusive to males from indigenous elite families: Europeans were excluded. In a photograph of the members of the club produced in *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, a gentleman in a “trouser under the cloth” sits prominently in the front row of the group (Figure 10.5).⁴¹

Challenges to colonial authority by the local elite were facilitated by the liberal values learned via education in Britain. Their consequent reorientation towards Eastern associations produced a hybrid identity midway between colonial and nationalist positions. The ambivalence of this predicament within a growing climate of nationalism can be described through two of the de Soysa residences built for Charles’s sons, A. J. R. (Alfred Joseph Richard) and T. H. A. (Thomas Henry Arthur). Both houses were built on the Alfred House estate, close to their father’s mansion, and are the only examples of de Soysa houses in Colombo still extant.⁴²

Richard’s house, *Lakshmigiri*, was a two-story mansion designed after an Italian villa with large gardens, ornate terraces and trellised verandas (Figure 10.6). It was a sprawling complex with a large front lawn and back garden. Unlike Alfred House, which was constructed lengthways, to be viewed from the road, *Lakshmigiri* penetrated the depth of the site, its shrinking frontage indicative of Colombo’s increasing urbanization. Palatial in its own right, it was modeled after the Palladian villa, following the fashion of that period. However, despite an ornate pair of entrance gates copied from Buckingham Palace, the mansion was given an Indian



Figure 10.5
The members of the
Orient Club, Colombo.



Figure 10.6
Lakshmigiri.

name, demonstrating Richard's nationalist leanings. Indeed he was not alone in this contradictory practice, for names like *Maligawa* (palace), *Swarna Giri*, *Sanda Giri* and *Mumtaz Mahal*, applied to other bourgeois mansions, reinforced this new Indian/Eastern consciousness.

The reference to Indian places and ideas by the Ceylonese elite at the turn of the century was still largely superficial. Within the residence itself, the organization of space and the practice of daily life remained westernized. These values would change more radically once elite women who shared these ideals used them to transform their self-expression. The de Soysa women of the third generation advocated such a shift by changing to Eastern dress for public social functions. Regina, Arthur's wife, and her close friend, Catherine Sri Chandrasekere, defiantly wore Indian saris, instead of Western gowns, to the Governor's ball.⁴³ Catherine was the wife of W. A. de Silva, a close friend of Ananda Coomaraswamy, founder of the Ceylon Social Reform Society and ardent supporter of traditional art and craft. Contact with Coomaraswamy undoubtedly influenced these two society ladies in their nationalist stance. However, the style of sari they adopted was neither local nor traditional (Figure 10.7). It was worn with stockings and court shoes, pinned with brooches and had a curious frill attached along its lower section!

The nationalist sentiments of the de Soysa family are best expressed in Regina *Walawwa*, the mansion built in 1912 by Arthur de Soysa for his beloved wife. It has few rooms, with numerous verandas at the front, back and sides of the building, while a rectangular lawn spreads out before its entrance. Its asymmetrical plan with turrets and conical roofs is reminiscent of the Victorian Eclecticism that emerged as a style in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. The style owed its asymmetrical plans and elevations to the influence of the Picturesque Movement and renewed interest in the rustic character of rural vernacular buildings. Based on these ideas, architects of the Arts and Crafts movement developed long narrow plans of one-room depth omitting interior corridors. Eccentric elevations with towers

or turrets were also a feature of this style, as was the incorporation of Classical, Gothic and Indian or Indic architectural features. Regina *Walawwa* demonstrates many features reminiscent of the Gothic style, such as a turret and informal asymmetrical plan (Figure 10.8).

Regina *Walawwa* is also reminiscent of the “Travancore style” attributed to the comparatively well-known British Indian architect, Robert Chisholm. Examples of this style would be his designs for the Napier Museum in Trivandrum and the Madras Post and Telegraph Office built during the 1870s–1880s. Chisholm claimed that this style was developed on the environmentally responsive rationale of indigenous forms derived from the religious and palatial architecture of the humid south-west coast of India.⁴⁴ Arthur, in contrast, sought it out as an Eastern expression following a visit to Motilal Nehru’s house *Ananda Bhawan* (later called *Swaraj Bhawan*) in Allahabad in 1904.⁴⁵ His granddaughters recall that he was inspired by the nationalist orientation of the elder Nehru (a westernized lawyer and father of the future Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru).⁴⁶ A dressing table for Arthur’s eldest daughter, Violet, was purchased at an exhibition of Indian-style furniture during this visit, and copies of it were made for her two younger sisters.⁴⁷

Sadly for Arthur, Regina died a year before the completion of their house. The



Figure 10.7
Arthur and Regina.

hearse carrying her coffin was driven along the driveway and through the porch of the incomplete residence. Arthur's children inherited their parent's nascent nationalism despite their westernized upbringing. The wedding of the eldest daughter, Violet, held at Regina *Walawwa* five or six years following her mother's death, embraced Eastern traditions. According to the local newspapers,

The bridegroom accompanied by the best man, Mr. Reginald M. Fernando was an early arrival. Awaiting the bride were bridesmaids eleven in number. The bride arrived punctually to time, escorted by her father, who was attired in consular uniform of broad cloth and gold. She was attired in a handsome oriental saree of white crepe de chine beautifully embroidered with silver. The saree was turned out by Mssrs. Dayaram brothers, the well-known Bombay merchants of the Fort. The jacket was of flowered satin with sleeves of white crinon [*sic*] trimmed with silver and pearls. A plain tulle veil over a wreath of orange blossoms and white heather completed her toilet.⁴⁸

In comparison with his bride-to-be, the groom, L. E. O. Pieris, wore a Western-style wedding suit with coat tails, top hat and gloves. The trouser and cloth of previous generations appeared to have been split by gender. Once again, elite women could favor an Eastern costume, because they had less to lose by publicizing their preferences. However, the sari, imported from India, was only worn in public and was often discarded for Western-style "housecoats" at home.⁴⁹

Despite the tenuous dress codes, and the ease with which one dress replaced the other in elite homes, the focus of elite culture had decidedly shifted. Families like the de Soysas, who had for generations adapted Portuguese and English names such as Jeronis, Susew, Charles and Thomas, deliberately selected Indian or Sinhalese names for the next generation. In keeping with his Eastern orientation, Thomas Henry Arthur de Soysa named his first three grandchildren Erananda, Sirima and



Figure 10.8
Regina *Walawwa*.

Rupa.⁵⁰ By the 1930s, when mounting agitation for independence from Britain fired the political spirit of the Ceylonese elite, they were living in Neoclassical mansions with Indian names and leaning heavily towards Indian cultural themes and behavior.

The importation of Indian ideas by these elite families can be attributed to two factors. First, it seemed prudent to borrow from Indian nationalism, which was far more forceful than its Ceylonese counterpart. Second, the new elite who had risen from marginal caste groups were reluctant to reinstate the indigenous hierarchy that had once marginalized them. They were most comfortable within a Ceylonese identity, which accommodated diverse castes and ethnic groups while opposing colonization. Ethnocentric *Sinhalese* nationalism favored the *Govigama* political elite, whose feudal legitimacy made their leadership acceptable to the majority Sinhalese population. According to Roberts, with the granting of universal adult suffrage in 1931 such popularity became essential for manipulating the collective vote, and hardened *Govigama* supremacy in the politics of the nation.⁵¹

The rising spirit of nationalism forced a hiatus in the activities of the Ceylonese elite who found themselves outside the national picture. While westernization could be easily appropriated and carefully learned, indigenous roots with their ancient bloodlines could not be manufactured. Despite attempts to invent such connections, using mythical claims and associated insignia, the validity of *Karave* heritage remained in question. Accordingly, the *Karave* claimed *Kshatriya* descent, thus aligning their lineage with a high-caste Indian bloodline, and argued that they were the *Kaurave* clan who were defeated in the battle in the *Mahabharata* epic.⁵² J. S. W. de Soysa, the fifth son of Charles, gave the name *Kurukshethra*, after the site of the epic battle, to his mansion in Angulana, Moratuwa. The *Karave* manufactured a flag and pearl umbrella (signifying royalty) to be used at public occasions. While these claims may have raised the self-confidence of caste members, it did little to convince the larger Sinhalese population.

ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS

During the pre-Independence period, when Buddhist sentiments were first being invoked for the cause of nationalism, it was the values of the Christianized elite that came under fire. Anagarika Dharmapala and the "Society for the Propagation of Buddhism" openly attacked the material culture of the late colonial period, decrying the sale of alcohol, the neglect of Sinhalese education in local schools, and the adoption of Western dress.⁵³

Strongly influenced by Victorian morality, Dharmapala declared that for the ideal woman "a proper blouse should cover the breast, stomach and back completely" and "a cloth ten *riyans* [cubits] long should be worn as *osariya* or saree." In the case of men, he rejected the Western combination of hat, comb, collar, tie, *banian* (singlet), shirt, vest coat, coat, trousers, cloth socks, and shoes. Wickramasinghe suggests that wearing national dress was the first and foremost form of political rebellion against the indignity of having been clothed by a conquering power.⁵⁴

The concept of a national dress came about after 1931 with universal adult suffrage and the political empowerment of ordinary people. Mahatma Gandhi's adoption of the loincloth had, no doubt, a profound influence on nationalist leaders. This distinction was further consolidated post-Independence when Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike presented his thirteen cabinet members, attired in sarong and singlet, to the country. The son of an elite *Govigama* family who had been brought up wearing Western dress, he used a change of dress to demonstrate his new nationalist alliance. Whereas anglicized elites, insecure in their imitation of the West, had once manipulated the short cloth to their advantage, they were now lengthening it to hide their trousers! English, the language that divided colonial society into Western and vernacular cultures, was aptly labeled *kaduwa*, the sword. "Once independence was won, dress was used no longer to distinguish colonizers from colonized but true nationalists from lackeys of the West," observes Wickramasinghe.⁵⁵

Whereas the *Govigama* elite could call upon their precolonial past to assist in the erasure of their own westernization, the *Karave* had no such recourse, and returned to the margins of the new nation. Their influence diminished with universal adult franchise and with the demise of Ceylonese political identity post-Independence. By the 1940s, the name "Ceylonese" suggested a position born of prior westernization, a hybrid identity that opposed the ethnocentric definition of nationhood. Postcolonial nationalism demanded new allegiances based on precolonial indigenous racial and religious traditions. The public architecture of the period demonstrated this shift by applying Buddhist motifs on columns and fascias. Between the 1930s and 1950s several public buildings, including the National Art Gallery and the Independence Hall in Colombo, as well as several Christian churches used indigenous/Buddhist structures as models for their architecture.⁵⁶

From among these the Trinity College Chapel, which was based on the plan of the King's Audience Hall in Kandy, is an intriguing example of a new form of hybridity. The Audience Hall, designed in 1783 by Devendra Mulachariya, had a two-pitched Kandyan roof supported on carved timber columns.⁵⁷ The Chapel was completed in 1939 to a design by the British Vice-Principal of the College, Mr Gastor, who had advocated "building in the vernacular."⁵⁸ Columns, bases, fascia and tiles were decorated with Buddhist decorative motifs typically used for Buddhist temples. The application of Buddhist forms and details in the design of a Christian institution was at this time a radical departure from colonial practice, where churches closely followed European models. The colonial Public Works Department copied the same model when designing the Independence Hall in Colombo in 1953. But unlike the public buildings, which were bold expressions of the ethnic bias of national identity, the architecture of the chapel revealed the uneasy negotiation of East and West.

The ethno-religious focus of public architecture and its anticolonial message retarded a parallel transformation in domestic architecture. Colombo's residents were more cautious in their choice of self-expression. Consequently variations on the bungalow model, built on less than one acre of land, prevailed for some years.

Originally designed to house British civil servants,⁵⁹ and disseminated via colonial pattern books such as *Modern Eastern Bungalows and How to Build Them*,⁶⁰ these hipped-roofed masonry structures appeared comparatively innocuous. However, their politics were concealed within their envelopes along with the incorporation of services and related amenities. They were divided spatially according to Eastern and Western practices such as the *issaraha kamaraya*, front room (Western drawing room); *issaraha kema*, front food (Western-style food); and the pantry where the civil servant's wife prepared Western desserts. The racial divisions that once separated the colonial family and the "native" servants were thus inscribed in domestic space. When, following independence in 1948, British civil servants were replaced by their Ceylonese counterparts, these divisions marked differences in social class, language and degrees of westernization between householder and servants.

A domestic architecture based on a culturally rooted but politically neutral Eastern tradition took a further thirty years in the making. It was conceived by European-trained local architects and championed by political elites who could refer back to their precolonial identities with nostalgia. As projections of patriotism became the primary aspirations of such groups, the colonial dialectic of trouser and cloth was usefully reversed. Whereas the Ceylonese elite had once sought after heraldic themes of the English gentry, they were now turning to anonymous provincial examples.

Andrew Boyd, a British tea researcher turned architect, identified the vernacular style as a possible inspiration for an architecture derived from "A People's Tradition" in articles written between 1939 and 1947.⁶¹ Minnette de Silva, the first Asian woman to study at the Architectural Association in London, expanded on this theme in written and built works.⁶² Following a careful study of vernacular structures initiated by a Danish architect, Ulrik Plesner, and reinforced by references to southern European vernacular buildings, this new style took shape through a partnership between Plesner and a local Eurasian architect, Geoffrey Bawa (the brother of Bevis).⁶³ Bawa, supported by his elite clientele, would gain an international reputation for perfecting this approach.

The new vernacular had several strengths. Its expression was secular and therefore distinguishable from previous public architecture. It utilized local materials and building practices during a period of import substitution under a Socialist government.⁶⁴ Yet its expression was not entirely "timeless" and apolitical, as often suggested in discussions of Bawa's work. Although couched and framed as a revival of the vernacular, the expansive scale, metropolitan location and masonry construction of these buildings often resembled *walawwas*.

CONCLUSION

The new vernacular acted as a device by which the westernized elite concealed their colonial habits beneath a veneer of local culture. It commodified a provincial lifestyle of peasant artifacts and veranda furniture as an elite aesthetic, inserting it into Colombo's confined urban spaces. It also created a metropolitan cultural

ambience based on an Eastern bohemian persona that was embraced by artists, architects, dancers and musicians. The designer sarong was reintroduced as an acceptable form of evening wear within these social circles, concealing Western aspirations and projecting indigenous loyalties, just as the short cloth had once concealed the trouser. However, whereas public and personal spaces were differentiated by dress during the colonial period, creating unusual cultural hybrids, the embrace of the sarong as an artifact common to both after independence suggested the suppression of such hybridity. The politics of national identity sharpened the differences between the East and the West, with the vernacular style as an embodiment of an idyllic precolonial past. As its political and economic advantages as a marker of identity became apparent, it was applied equally to the design of elite residences, luxury hotels and public institutions, such as the Sri Lankan Parliament by Bawa. If Western or even modern aspirations were concealed within their indigenous envelopes, they were not made evident.

On either side of the event of Ceylon's independence, generations of westernized elite had appropriated Western or Eastern cultural forms to inform their identities. In each example it is evident that their representations were manufactured. One was more appealing to the colonial government and the other to the nationalist state, although both were careful to maintain their secular expression. They seemed, in retrospect, equal but opposite processes that reflected wider ideological shifts during that period. However, in its idyllic recuperation of a precolonial past, the new vernacular secured both public and private space, erasing the creative disjunction of its predecessors. The uneven appropriation of trouser and cloth, with its promise of social mobility that had exposed the anxieties of a bourgeoisie in the making, was no longer available for scrutiny or critique.

Chapter 11: Negotiated Modernities

Symbolic Terrains of Housing in Delhi¹

Jyoti Hosagrahar

INTRODUCTION

Delhi in the early twentieth century was a city of many cities and a contested terrain: the object of European romantic imagery and denigration, the site of imperial destruction and, from the European perspective, improvement. The agendas of colonialism and the ideals of modernism encountered inherited structures and spatial practices in Delhi to create a fractured urbanism that de-familiarized the familiar, appropriated the new, and created the multiple conflicting landscapes of "modern" Delhi. The plural expressions of Delhi's modernity also expressed the contradictions inherent in the planning interventions.

By the 1930s, signs of progress were everywhere in Delhi for those who perceived them as such. Wide paved roads, tramlines, regional linkages by rail lines and roads, bridges, electricity, piped water supply, underground sewage lines and treatment plants, factories and mills, a reorganized system of urban administration with clearly defined territories, by-laws, building codes, an organized police force, several large hospitals and a system of smaller dispensaries, colleges, schools, museums, and new retail centers were evident in the city. Above all was a shining new imperial city, New Delhi, three miles to the south of what increasingly became known as "Old" Delhi (Figure 11.1). Striking as these changes were, by 1946, after nearly a century of turmoil, the architecture and urbanism of Delhi remained patchy and at best "incomplete." In its transformation into a "modern" city in the European mold its status was only tentative. Even where formal elements resembled those of Europe, in a reconstituted context the spatial culture – use, meanings, and practices – in which the buildings were embedded differed significantly.

In apparent contrast to the expansive new metropolis, the walled city seemed to become ever more congested, more haphazard, and more uncontrollable. The city had clearly outgrown its walled precincts. Immediately to the west of the walls, regardless of official enthusiasm to establish orderly extensions, spontaneous development continued. As the old city came to represent the limits of official



Figure 11.1
View of secretariat
buildings from King's
Way. The dome of the
Viceroy's House is in the
distance.

visions of science and rationality, planned development of the government's vast estates around the walled city promised to celebrate the transformative powers of reason. Between the two seemingly oppositional spaces developed an intermediate landscape of planned communities with tidy lots and identical units. Located on the outskirts of the old walled city of Delhi and the new imperial city of New Delhi, the new housing projects remained on the margins of both and, for long, largely neglected in scholarship on Delhi.² From the perspective of European modernity, the new residential developments formed a "modernizing" landscape: one that showed recognizable signs but was as yet incompletely "modern" in its advancement towards a predetermined end. This chapter explores the tenuous and tentative modernity of this landscape of housing.

A close examination of the "improvement" projects reveals complex and contradictory perceptions and realities. Implicit in the development of new housing for the local population was the colonial view of a regulated and "modern" environment creating an obedient citizen free from the bonds of tradition. The imperial government's drive to maximize profit conflicted with their agenda to "civilize" and "modernize." From the perspective of European thought, science and rationality had unitary definitions and universal value. Scientific principles of planning and architectural design in their view would uplift and construct a unified subject population. However, not all sections of the citizenry were convinced of the powers of a singular science or the objectivity with which the principles were applied. Hidden agendas, political ambitions, and local customs of building and living countered British efforts to deliberately reshape Delhi's landscape. The planned extensions and new developments that emerged from the "improvement" efforts resembled in many ways the familiar European and North American forms prevalent at the time. Yet, the negotiation of the concepts assumed to be universal with the particularities of local politics and culture made the familiar forms unique to Delhi. At a moment when all that was familiar was under change, residents too questioned customary ways of living and building and adapted them to the changing circumstances of

Delhi. I have proposed elsewhere the concept of *indigenous modernities* as a way to understand the alternative and localized interpretations of an idealized and universal modernity.³ From this perspective, the multiple resolutions of these mediations were landscapes that were at once both indigenous and modern: the indigenous modernities of Delhi.

FROM PICTURESQUE CITY TO “SLUM”

By the end of the First World War, industry and commerce had grown substantially in Delhi. Factories and mills had been established; roadways and railways transported goods in and out of the city connecting Delhi to its immediate region and to more distant cities around the country. For European observers signs of private enterprise and economic prosperity were everywhere but living conditions seemed only to deteriorate. With the completion of the new imperial city, the walled city, they lamented, grew ever more congested, and unplanned neighborhoods proliferated just beyond the walls (Figure 11.2). In less than a century after they had taken over, colonial officials declared Delhi, the home of emperors and princes, the mystical and exotic city of the Orient, an uncivilized “slum.”

Municipal projects to provide piped water and sewage disposal, though greatly publicized, were limited in their reach. For many areas, the lack of water supply and sewage infrastructure combined with increasing overcrowding to create unsanitary conditions that seriously concerned the health officials. Even as the imperial government struggled to reform the city according to recent innovations in sanitary science and technology, many sections of the populace opposed the interventions as being politically motivated or not in their best interests. Elite Indians educated in English and colonial institutions, however, accused the imperial government of incompetence and gross neglect. The Medical Officer of Health of Delhi published a report in 1934 that confirmed the worst fears of the colonial administrators.⁴ “Delhi the Death-Trap,” an article published in the popular Bombay English-language daily *The Times of India* early in the same year reported that Delhi’s population had increased enormously since the government of India had established their new capital.⁵ The city, according to the *Times*, had become “a hot bed of preventable disease.” In the Medical Officer’s representation, “... so great is the overcrowding in some parts of the city that the houses are ‘nothing short of death traps.’ ” Further, twenty-seven areas in the city were without sewers, and life was still worse in the unplanned neighborhoods that had sprung up to the west of the city walls. As the *Times* noted, “... the population of 15,000 in the new area lives without drains or properly made roads and has to draw its water supply from wells sunk in the ground which receives the sullage from the houses.”⁶ Where officials blamed irresponsible citizens for the city’s condition, the public held the municipality guilty of neglect.

In 1935 the imperial government appointed A. P. Hume as a Special Officer to investigate what officials had come to view as “the problem of congestion” in Delhi city and offer his recommendations for relief. Statistics and census data involving



detailed counts of population were instrumental in declaring the city congested. With most of the migrants moving into the old walled city and its extensions immediately outside the walls, population densities of these areas were 30 times greater than the population densities of New Delhi and 100 times greater than in the Cantonment. The extreme variation in density only served to widen the disparities between the old city (Delhi Municipality) and those areas that the colonial authorities considered desirable for habitation, such as New Delhi, the Civil Lines, and the Cantonment, all primarily occupied by Europeans. Further, as Hume pointed out in his report, the density of population in the Delhi Municipal area was far greater than that of any other city in India. Unsanitary conditions in the old city were exacerbated by the absence of adequate infrastructure. Despite the stated intentions of the municipality, until 1931 the water-borne system served only about 20,000 people out of a total population of around 350,000.⁷ And even this figure does not indicate how many had actually installed the relevant equipment and gained connections.

Simultaneous with the deterioration of living conditions, new economic policies encouraged enterprise, set capital free, and made property a marketable commodity rather than a hereditary right. Petty entrepreneurs, landlords and the emerging middle and lower-middle classes saw immense opportunities in the city. The creation of a land market combined with demographic changes to create an upsurge in the value of real estate in the city. The demand for housing as well as space for small businesses was far in excess of what was available. Although some sections of the residents shared the official concern for congestion, many property owners saw an opportunity to capitalize on their assets. Subdividing property, adding a floor or extra rooms, converting courtyards into rooms, or appropriating communal open space adjacent to their properties became ways of expanding properties for rental or for sale, in this way accommodating the flood of immigrants.

While Delhi's municipal building code had been revised and made more stringent over the years, officials found it increasingly problematic to control and regulate building development.⁸ Intertwined as the buildings were, owners added to and extended their properties as they saw fit, and as they could agree with their neighbors. The municipal vision of the city was frequently in conflict with customary spatial practices. The one was rigid and contrary to local logic, where the other was flexible and responsive. The municipality set up a Building Committee expressly to review proposals for all construction work in order that they met the building codes and that plans could be sanctioned.

Inhabitants of the city found ingenious ways of getting around the most restrictive of regulations, frustrating administrators' attempts to "safeguard" the health of the residents. For their part, unconvinced by the colonial administration's rhetoric of benevolence and justice, Delhi's residents had over the years become increasingly skilled at confronting the municipality through legal procedures. They brought restraining orders on demolitions and appealed through court injunctions. Municipal reports are replete with details of court proceedings regarding cases of

Figure 11.2 (opposite)
Plan of Delhi, 1930. This shows the walled city, the Civil Lines to the north and spontaneous developments to the west. Also shows gardens, orchards and villages to the north, northwest and southwest.

- 1 Historic walled city
- 2 Civil Lines
- 3 Sabzi Mandi
- 4 Sadar Bazaar
- 5 Paharganj
- 6 New Delhi
- 7 New military
cantonment

irregularities in building (Figure 11.3). Property owners took advantage of loopholes in the regulations to legalize an illegal structure after construction. Renewing applications, filing appeals, and appealing to higher courts were all means that residents employed to work around a building code they likely considered restrictive and rigid. City officials complained that “scant respect was shown for by-laws honored more in breach than in observance.”⁹ Yet construction did not take place with complete disregard for regulation. Rather, residents sought to achieve their vision insidiously, with the least confrontation. Officials observed with consternation that residents would commence building operations without permission from the municipal authorities. The objective was to circumvent building by-laws and test their limits. As one dismayed official noted:

To defeat the object of “set-back” the entire building is proposed to be rebuilt excepting the wall abutting on the narrow lane on which the building is situated. The wall is then plastered and in some cases actually rebuilt at convenient hours when no member of the Municipal staff is expected to be there. This is one of the commonest devices.¹⁰

If building inspectors observed the unauthorized structure and served notice for its removal, the residents would bring pressure on the courts to delay proceedings and claim that the structure had always been there.¹¹ In 1939, more than half a century after municipal efforts at regulating the building form of the city had begun, officials documented 12,654 cases of offences under the Municipal Act.¹²

The residents’ complex identities and multiple loyalties further complicated the city government’s efforts to make the built form conform to the ideal of the by-law. Municipal inspectors and lower administrative members of the Committee were also local residents, members of extended families, neighborhoods, religious sects, and communities. The relationship of these individuals to their fellow citizens

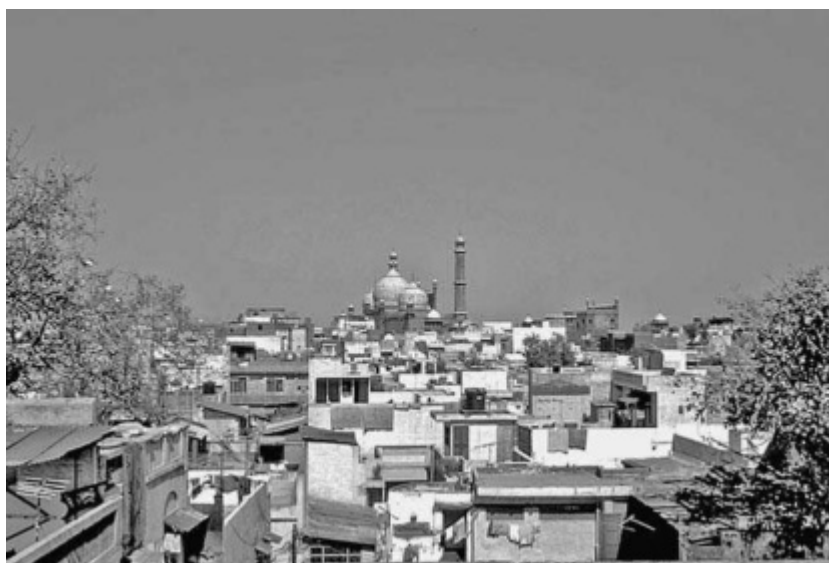


Figure 11.3
A contemporary view of the incrementally developed form of the walled city – indicative of what city administrators would have considered unregulated and chaotic building. The dome and minarets of the Jama Masjid are on the horizon.

in their various capacities was significant. “Goodwill money” or other political pressures were clearly not unknown.¹³ So widespread were the subversive practices in building that officials in charge of reviewing building plans and sanctioning permission were forced to view the cases with leniency. In many instances, even when the city’s Building Committee had rejected a proposed plan outright, the owner simply resubmitted the same as a fresh application without any modification and obtained approval through political or financial means. In this practice people used their social capital, the informal exchange of favors, to accomplish their desired goals.¹⁴ A common subterfuge was for a temporary lean-to on the terrace to expand gradually over time to become a whole additional floor without attracting attention until it was fully built up.

For those who hoped that it would eventually resemble the “modern” cities of western Europe, Delhi proved disappointing. Clearly, officials had attempted without success for decades to reshape the walled city to achieve at least some aspects of the idealized form of the “modern” metropole. Yet even as officials struggled to control it, Delhi spilled out of the walls and rapidly developed into spontaneous arrangements in the Paharganj, Sadar Bazaar and Sabzi Mandi areas to the west of the walls. For the colonial government, with a glorious new imperial capital, and with valuable properties at stake, the notion of creating ideal neighborhoods outside the walled city took root. City officials were convinced that removing “slums” was necessary to ameliorate what they were convinced were unsanitary conditions and excessive congestion.¹⁵ For the city to be kept healthy, “slums” had to be removed like the gangrenous limbs that must be forgone to save the body. The ideal city, its designers believed, was one that stood complete at its birth and yet still had the power to grow without losing its character.¹⁶

THE DIT’S VISIONS OF MODERNITY

The colonial government owned vast tracts of Crown land – the so-called *nazul* estates – on all sides of the walled city. With the building of New Delhi, it had further acquired enormous properties to the west and south. In the face of rapid urban growth and rising land values, the administration of these assets, officials agreed, was a matter of urgent concern. The Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT) was established in 1936 with the authority to administer large government estates and deal with problems of “slum clearance.”¹⁷ With the objective of reforming and modernizing the city, the DIT was charged with the responsibility of relieving congestion, improving living conditions, and developing new areas as planned extensions to the city.¹⁸ A complete development providing for roads, streets, space for building, and services, imagined and laid out at once, had not been previously undertaken in Delhi. The DIT had the legal authority to acquire lands, relocate people and carry out construction, as well as the fiscal instruments and autonomy to raise funds to finance its projects.

On government lands that still contained villages, orchards and fields, the DIT set about developing new housing enclaves that exemplified everything the old city

was not: straight wide roads, tidy lots, and units of predictable and equivalent character and value that were classified and grouped as such.¹⁹ The removal of “slums” (including portions of the walled city) was central to the DIT’s responsibilities and, from an official perspective, necessary to achieve “improvements” in the health of Delhi city:

If the city is to be brought on lines more compatible with public health it is evident that a major portion of the city will have to be pulled down which is not a practicable proposition. All that would perhaps be possible to do is to clear out slums from highly congested areas or to drive one or two roads through the city and thus force a section of the public to move out of the city to settle down in new *bastis* [enclave or settlement] to be built outside the city wall.²⁰

The DIT’s work in the city was wide-ranging: in addition to housing and “slum clearance,” they included the grassing of the barren areas to the south and west of the Fort that were cleared soon after the 1857 Rebellion (known as the Champ-de-Mars Irrigation Scheme); the layout of housing for the well-to-do (Daryaganj South), the middle class (the Western Extension Scheme), and the poorer sections (the Ahata Kidara Scheme); numerous “slum clearance” and “relocation” projects; the redevelopment of commercial streets (the Faiz Bazaar scheme); the construction of markets (the Sabzi Mandi Fruit and Vegetable Market); and the relocation and construction of a new slaughter house. The efforts to reorganize and improve the city also included a proposal for developing an Industrial Area. Creating a separate industrial area removed such uses from valuable land in the heart of the city to less expensive land on the outskirts (Figure 11.4).²¹

One of the earliest schemes that the DIT took up in 1936 was the development of Daryaganj South into a residential enclave for affluent Indians. An area of 21 acres just south of the palace had once been an elite neighborhood of princely mansions that the British had leveled, appropriated, and kept vacant after the 1857 clearances. On tidy blocks along orthogonal streets were townhouses three stories high and small bungalow sites that were a quarter of an acre each. If the DIT did not construct the structures, they regulated the building footprint, volume, entrances, openings, and relative arrangement of rooms.

The main commercial spine running through Daryaganj, the once prosperous Faiz Bazaar, was reorganized to have standardized shop sites fronting on to the main street with small narrow lots of 200 to 350 square yards each. Strict design controls by the DIT enforced a standard frontage on the shops along Faiz Bazaar Road, while a service access was made possible from the rear. The intention was to achieve a rhythmic and controlled facade with a predictable and high value for the property (Figure 11.5).

The DIT’s design of Daryaganj South was an attempt to establish urban dwelling patterns modeled on European forms that most DIT officials believed were universally “modern.” Both townhouses and bungalows were dwelling forms that were new to the walled city. The buildings were set back from the street edge, with front lawns defining a different relationship to the street than was customary (Figure 11.6). The equivalent size and similar design of adjacent buildings assumed

Figure 11.4 (opposite)
Location of DIT projects
in 1939. Only two of the
projects had been
completed; the rest were
in various stages of
planning and
implementation:

- 1 Daryaganj South
- 2 Champ-de-Mars
Irrigation Scheme
- 3 Delhi Ajmeri Gate Slum
Clearance Scheme
- 4 Garstin Bastion Road
- 5 Western Jumna Canal
- 6 Hathi Khana
- 7 New Fruit and
Vegetable Market
- 8 Mohtaj Khana and
Old Fruit Market
- 9 Andha Mughal
Colony
- 10 Northern City
Extension
- 11 Roshnara Extension
- 12 Sarai Rohilla Town
Extension
- 13 Industrial Area
- 14 Shadipur Extension
- 15 Western Extension
- 16 Ahata Kidara
- 17 Grassing of Motia
Khan Dump
- 18 Original Road
Paharganj
- 19 Basti Ara Kashan
- 20 Paharganj Circus

DELHI IMPROVEMENT TRUST
WORKS & SCHEMES 1937-1939.

Scale 2 inches = 1 Mile.

REFERENCES

Schemes completed.	
" under execution.	
" contemplated.	

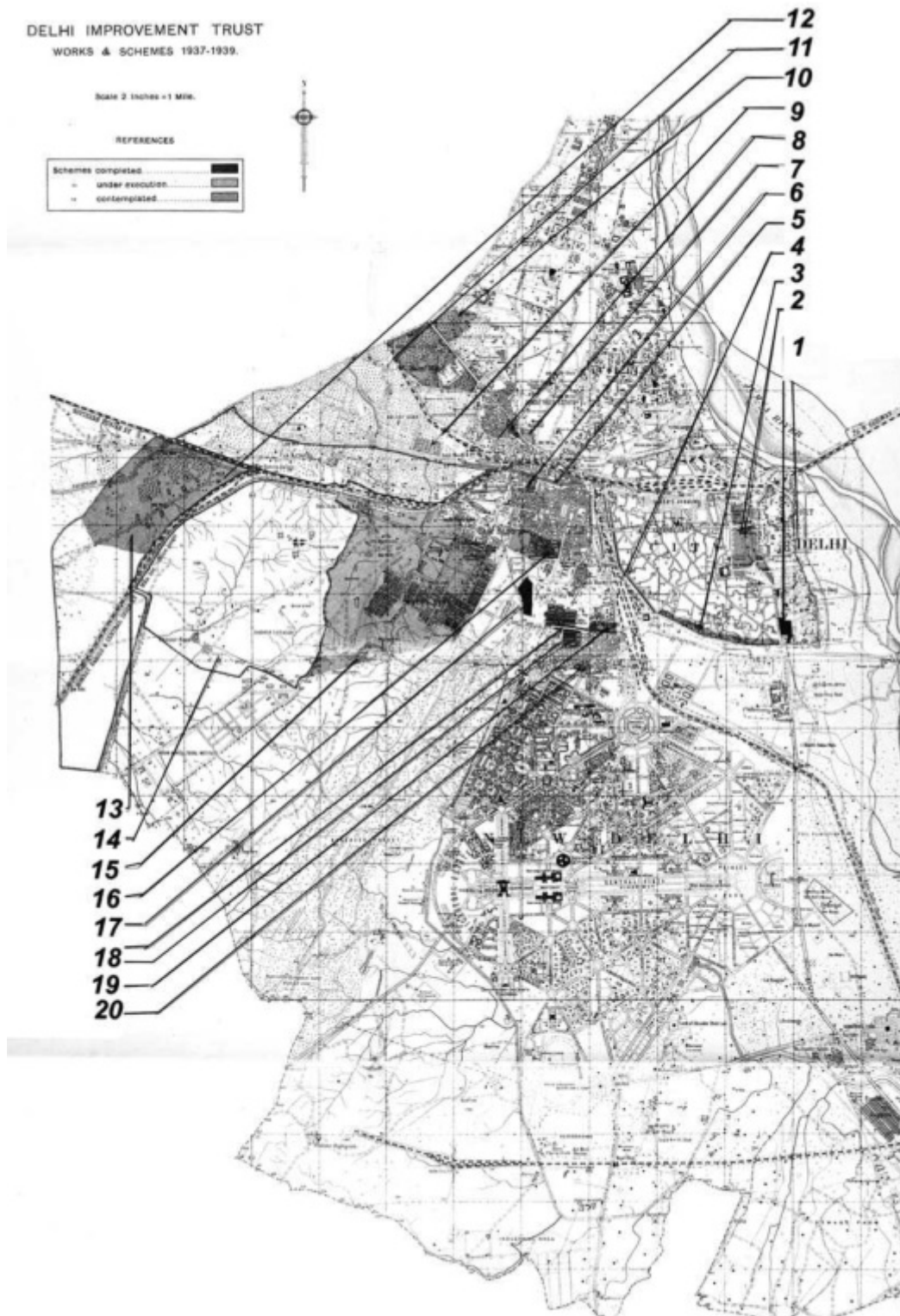




Figure 11.5
View of DIT rebuilding
along Faiz Bazaar Road,
Daryaganj. Note the
regulation heights, and
elevation types. Over the
years, these have been
modified by the owners
to suit their individual
needs.

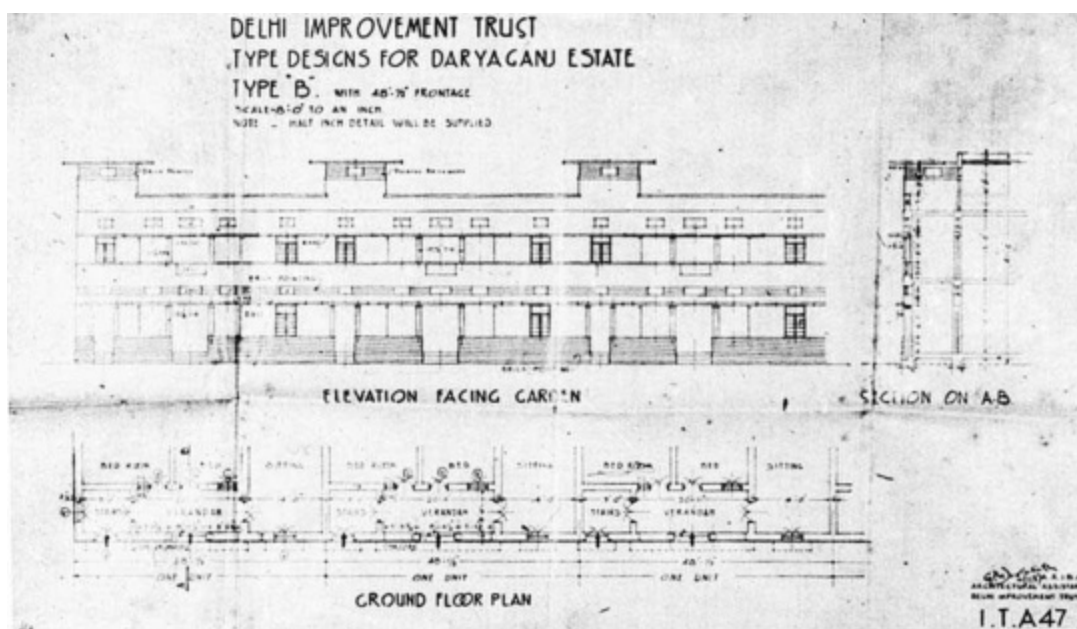


Figure 11.6
DIT designs for housing for the well-to-do. The DIT made detailed 1/2-inch construction drawings available to the owners. The units were grouped around a park. The buildings were narrow and set back from the streets, with front lawns. The front elevation was regulated, as was the plan of the front portion. Interior spaces were functionally separated and no internal courtyard was indicated.

the absence of social hierarchy within a group of structures. Rooms with specific and separate uses such as “sitting room” and “bedroom” were configured on European models of a small nuclear family, and modes of familial interaction and privacy that were different from those prevalent in the walled city. No internal courtyards or private open spaces were indicated in the proposals, and the transition from the public street to private interior space was abrupt by local standards. The expectation was that, in adapting to their new dwelling, people would westernize their way of living to fall in line with the normative model.

In marked contrast to schemes such as those for Daryaganj, housing for the poorer sections of the population was sited in less desirable locations on the outskirts of the city, with higher densities and smaller units. The Andha Mughal colony, for instance, was established as a new area for those classified as “poor class.” Gypsies, tanners, pig-keepers, and others officials viewed as “undesirable” were relocated away from the heart of another DIT project, the Western Extension scheme, aimed at a “middle class” population.²² The evicted tenants were moved to Andha Mughal, on less valuable land near a sewage pumping station. Thus the poor, the dispossessed and the socially marginal were relegated to new “slums” less visible to the well-to-do.²³ The DIT’s interventions reorganized people and space according to economic class. Homogeneity in architectural form either presumed homogeneity in social status and spatial practices that did not exist, or was intended to create it.

The layout of the “poor class” housing enclaves, such as Basti Rehghar and Hathi Khana, also proposed very small units closely packed together, served by narrow but straight roads (Figure 11.7). Unlike the affluent housing, these now included multipurpose rooms, and shared blocks of toilets. Private open spaces were generally absent in these. By implication, the “poor class” was further behind the affluent and Western-educated Indians on the road to achieving the European model of modernity. Official efforts at “improvement” thus actively involved restructuring the social landscape of the city by creating backward ghettos and affluent enclaves.

A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO ARCHITECTURE

Two fundamental notions underpinned the DIT’s work. First, it was assumed that environments shaped societies and people, and that people who lived in similar environments shared a similar culture. Second, architecture derived from the “modern science” and rationality developed in Europe was assumed to be universally valid regardless of culture and politics. The presumed supremacy and universality of a science that was, in fact, rooted in a particular European context justified the denigration of the walled city and its architecture as what the officials called a “slum” and the replacement by a new kind of built form as a superior alternative.

From statistical analyses to land surveys, accurate measurement and documentation of properties to the mathematical estimation of their market values, the DIT projects celebrated the triumph of “science” and the “scientific” method. In

contrast to what DIT officials perceived as irrational, disorderly and accidental development within the walled city, the new layouts exhibited what they believed was a logical classification and arrangement of land, roads, lots, buildings, house sizes, densities of units, family sizes, house plans, property values and income levels. The assumed neutrality of scientific observations belied the political motivations of planning decisions and an equally unfounded conviction of the universal validity of Western science, and denied logic to any other decision-making process.

The very perception of congestion and classification of a “slum” were both based on the “scientific” determination of density. For instance, in his *Report on the Relief of Congestion in Delhi*, Hume observed a total increase of 35 percent over the 1911 population and of 27 percent over the 1921 population: the increase in the wards immediately outside the walled city, including Sabzi Mandi, Paharganj and Sadar Bazaar, was substantially more, with an 87 percent increase over the 1911 population and 63 percent over the 1921.²⁴ Hume’s report was replete with figures, formulae and calculations.

Hume’s report had a very significant influence on the DIT schemes. He documented information in fastidious detail and made numerous recommendations based on his “scientific” study. However, translating this presumed universally applicable “scientific” advice into just planning policies was not simple. For instance, rather than putting in place a physical, social, and economic infrastructure that would allow communities to settle lands outside the walled city, or create



Figure 11.7

DIT layout plans for “poor class” housing in Basti Rehghar, Karol Bagh. Note the very small size of the lots and the dense but regular layout of lots. The smaller plots to the right are about 15 ft × 30 ft and the larger ones about 42 ft × 42 ft. The streets in some of the areas with the smallest lots were about 14 ft wide; alleyways were 10 ft. But most other streets were 30 ft wide. Small parks were provided between the rows of lots. Ironically, the parks were more frequent in the areas with larger lots than those with smaller lots.

incentives for new migrants to locate themselves outside the already congested nucleus, the DIT hoped to cultivate perfectly controlled visions of a European-inspired modernity. With little expectation of actual decongestion, the DIT's numerous projects envisioned impeccably ordered "modern" enclaves on vacant or thinly populated lands outside the congested center.

Contradictions were also evident in the biased interpretations of seemingly "neutral" data. The report identified several well-defined "slum areas" of "the meanest type," and Hume portrayed the city as abounding in "insanitary lanes and dwellings constituting a menace to the public health of the whole urban area of Delhi."²⁵ At the same time, the report revealed that the middle classes and the lower-middle classes constituted the largest section of the walled city, with a few who were destitute. Rather, it was the settlements that had sprung up to the west of the walled city that housed a larger number of the needy. Despite all indications that the spontaneous settlements of Sadar Bazaar, Sabzi Mandi and Paharganj were considerably poorer, more densely inhabited, and less served by city infrastructure than most of the walled city, the focus of the DIT efforts concentrated on decongesting the walled area.

Since one of the primary objectives of the new housing developments was to demonstrate the benefits of "scientifically" designed environments, officials greatly debated the question of what constituted an optimum or even an acceptable density. Despite extensive calculations on the amount of space needed per person, the standards that the DIT adopted in the end were illogical. That standards from one economic, political and cultural context were quite arbitrarily transferred to another did not seem to trouble any of the officials. With no explanation for his premise, Hume took fifty square feet of living space per person as a minimum. He further established other norms, such as that a single-storied house should occupy no more than one-fourth the size of the lot, and that the area occupied by roads, lanes, open spaces and places of public convenience should be 45 percent of the project area. His calculations corresponded to a density of 210 persons per acre for three-storied constructions. Since Hume saw the walled city as consisting of both two- and three-story structures, he recommended a figure of 200 persons per acre.²⁶ Hume claimed that the optimum density in his view was forty-four to an acre but, for practical reasons, he was going to be satisfied at the moment with a density of 200 persons to an acre. He offered no rationale for either of the two figures or for the enormous disparity between them. Despite the meticulous efforts to determine the figures logically, the final recommendations were quite arbitrary.

Having assumed ideal densities and compared them with existing ones within the walled area, in his report, Hume worked through detailed calculations to establish how many people needed to be removed from the old city and accommodated in extension schemes in order for the concentrations within the walled area to come down to levels his calculations showed as acceptable. While his computations showed the need to reduce the population of Delhi city by 138,000 persons to bring down the density, Hume's recommendations for new extension schemes were to accommodate 100,000 persons at the rate of 100 persons per acre. The

task then boiled down to finding 1,000 acres of vacant land to accommodate the “excess” population. In the complex manipulation of numbers, people with their tight-knit families and cultural communities were reduced to numbers, and the complex geography of neighborhoods to undifferentiated territories.

The DIT's efforts to develop model dwelling environments included establishing architectural norms and controls. In 1938 the Trust set up a standing subcommittee to advise on architectural questions. They were responsible for approving the prototype elevations and standard designs that the architecture section prepared under the supervision of an architect with a Western architectural training. Active members of the subcommittee included an engineer member of the Trust, Lala Sri Ram, one of Delhi's wealthiest industrialists, and Mr Walter George, a private architect who had been engaged previously on the New Delhi building project. The architectural controls, which contained no explanation of how or from where they were derived, were slightly different for each scheme but shared an overall similarity in character. The patterns reflected a curious mix of forms drawn from contemporary European spatial planning practices. The layouts, heights of buildings, setbacks from streets, space between buildings, locations of stairs, size and placement of rooms and services, sizes and placement of fenestration, materials and color of exterior finishes, detail of the (minimal) ornamentation, all were specified and carefully monitored by DIT officials. Houses (and shops) intended to have a similar market value were designed on a modular prototype and grouped together. Simple orthogonal proportions, flat roofs, and a functional layout of rooms built of brick also established detailed facade controls to make the buildings conform to the most recent recommendations of the sanitary engineers.²⁷ From the DIT's perspective all of these controls helped to elevate the quality of architecture and to promote the “general improvement of architectural standards in Delhi.”²⁸ The new standards were expected to make building designs more “scientific,” more reasoned and less given to arbitrariness or religious dictum.

Based on the regulations to reform British slums, minimum standards for light and ventilations were developed in the entirely different climatic and cultural context of Delhi. All new structures were expected to meet these requirements for light and ventilation. Although the exact basis on which the light and air requirements were formulated were generally vague or absent, a minimum volume of space was prescribed in front of and to the rear of each structure, and called the “front and rear air planes,” to allow for adequate ventilation of all the rooms. Similar setbacks were also established from the edge of the site to allow penetration of light. The Trust even retained the authority to decide the kind of latrine that was to be constructed (i.e. water-borne or dry; Indian-style or Western).²⁹ After the building section and the lands department had examined the application, the engineer member of the Trust inspected it before passing it on to the health member.³⁰ The Municipality centralized, standardized, and appropriated from the neighborhood even the smallest level of decision-making on building. All of these deliberations completely excluded from consideration the fact that in the hot, dry climate of Delhi, customary building practices minimized the direct penetration of sunlight

into the houses, opting instead for shady and breezy courtyards placed centrally in the dwelling and used as open-air living spaces.

NEGOTIATING HIDDEN AGENDAS: THE POLITICS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The designs and architectural controls may have imagined Indians forming tidy homogeneous bands of “poor,” “middle,” and “upper” “classes,” and the “scientific” standards assumed people to be undifferentiated beings in a territory, but the politics of implementing the DIT projects and their paradoxical outcomes revealed otherwise. In contrast to the passive subjectivity assumed in the deliberate imposition of modernist forms, people protested restrictions and sought opportunities to further their interests at a moment of cultural upheaval. In the changing cultural milieu of Delhi’s modernity, the idea of private enterprise and maximizing profit had taken root. The DIT’s institutional interests in profiteering, too, conflicted with the stated goals of planning to bring the greatest good for the greatest number.

DIT schemes were undertaken largely on government property such as the Andha Mughal, Western Extension, Arakashan and Garstin Bastion Road projects. But the DIT also acquired additional lands such as in the Roshanara Extension, Northern City Extension, Delhi Ajmeri Gate Slum clearance, Industrial Area, and Hathi Khana schemes. The Land Acquisition Act of 1894 allowed city officials to compulsorily acquire land from residents for public purposes. The heavy expense of laying out the extension was to be met from the profits earned. In situations where the owners were unwilling to sell or demanded a higher compensation than that offered by officials, the land was compulsorily acquired by enforcing the Land Acquisition Law.³¹ However, land acquisition for DIT projects was clearly not for public purposes.

Within just six months of starting its programs, both citizens and officials of the walled city were already disparaging the DIT’s work. The citizens accused the DIT of only pursuing extension schemes that were self-supporting or likely to yield a good profit. Nothing was done in reality, commentators observed, to remove what the DIT had labeled as “slums” from inside the city.³² Critics argued that the DIT’s projects were designed to bring in substantial profits to the imperial government.

“Slum clearance” was one of the DIT’s main responsibilities. Critics accused the Trust of following an incorrect sequence of activities in the way the clearances were carried out. In principle, the work was to follow a set procedure where an area was identified and the properties acquired. The owners of the “slum” sites were to be paid a minimum compensation and building sites allotted elsewhere to the original residents. The “slum” land itself was then to be improved in value by providing all essential services according to a sanctioned layout plan. The newly developed land was then to be leased out to other tenants on long-term leases or sold by public auction. In common practice, the DIT first evicted poor “slum” dwellers before they even acquired the property. Only after they had acquired, improved, and sold the properties at a considerable profit did the DIT take up rehousing for the displaced. As a consequence, the poor were pushed to the outskirts of the new

developments, or forced to huddle together in other “slums,” with no alternative accommodation, let alone economic and social networks.

In 1940, “rehousing” schemes were introduced into the repertoire of DIT projects as a separate category. “Rehousing” projects were to be state-subsidized schemes to accommodate the poor and the dispossessed forced out of the “slum” redevelopment. The idea was for the benevolent state to take care of “people of the poorest class dispossessed as the result of operations undertaken by the Trust.”³³ However, the housing schemes, designed to be financially self-sufficient, were inadequate for the families dispossessed, and slow to be implemented. Even where they had been built, they were often constructed as rental properties out of reach for the poor tenants. Compensation for the acquisition of property was only due to the owners. Critics accused the DIT of profiteering. Each year the expenditure of the DIT was considerably less than the income it had earned.³⁴

The DIT projects served to open up new properties to an already bullish land market. Economic transformations freeing capital made it possible for investors, both big and small, to seek out assets to invest in. Land speculation became rampant. Since speculation further raised land prices, making it difficult for the DIT to acquire properties for development or to make a substantial profit from them, officials attempted in vain to use legal instruments to fix prices. In this manner, the DIT’s programs for developing large estates embodied the contradictory goals of stimulating private capital while controlling it.

On the one hand, it was official policy to encourage private capital. As Hume clearly stated, the “... extension schemes must be expedited and reasonable facilities given to private capitalists to develop land outside the city.”³⁵ On the other hand, it was DIT practice to issue notification under the Land Acquisition Act scheme of any DIT scheme, while still at a conceptual stage, in order to fix land prices and prevent speculation before the scheme was realized on the ground.³⁶ Officials feared that, without such a notification, speculators would endeavor to take advantage of any scheme that the government approved for the city.³⁷

Regardless of the confidentiality of the schemes, Delhi’s petty capitalists learned of proposed projects even while they were in the earliest stages of discussion. The speculation that followed drove the prices of land up before any notification could go into effect.³⁸ Even before the DIT was actually established, Hume had noted in his study of the congestion in Delhi:

The public are aware that there is a definite intention on the part of the Municipality to launch a comprehensive extension scheme ... During a recent inspection, I found the agent of a private land-owner sitting under a tree on the Grand Trunk Road near the Najafgarh drain, with a register in his hands, awaiting bidders for a plot of land.³⁹

Residents were also aware of other monetary benefits they could derive from the redevelopment efforts that they had scant respect for to begin with. Where large-scale land acquisition was involved, a majority of the owners were generally dissatisfied with the amount of compensation, and appealed to a tribunal set up by the DIT for granting awards. For instance, in the Roshanara Extension project, land

was acquired by compulsion from 23 owners, and 21 of them appealed to the tribunal.⁴⁰ One property owner in the Roshanara scheme whose lands the Trust attempted to acquire filed a suit in the civil courts seeking a permanent injunction to restrain the Trust from acquiring his land. Several other property owners in the Roshanara and Northern City II extension and Hathi Khana “slum clearance” schemes requested the Trust to abandon the acquisition of their properties. In response, the DIT was obliged to negotiate with them over their properties and compensations. In some cases, it was forced to exempt the property from acquisition. Those whose properties had been exempted were required to pay the DIT a substantial sum equivalent to the estimated value of the land after redevelopment. Yet, even with the payments, most property owners preferred to remain in their old locations rather than allow their entire properties to be acquired and move to new locations, thus complicating matters for the DIT. The response of the citizenry was clear: people were unwilling to allow the Trust to acquire their properties towards an “improved” city. That the redevelopment efforts might increase the property value of the area or create a more ordered neighborhood did not impress property owners, who did not see these benefits accruing to them. Their resistance to the housing reforms was based not in an irrational distaste for order but a different logic. They engaged with the new economic and legal systems to consider maximizing their gains. From their perspective, accepting a small compensation to move elsewhere away from their extended family and community as well as their ancestral property threatened to bring ruin rather than improvement in their living conditions.

THE “SCIENCE” AND SIGNS OF MODERNITY

In the end, a particular take on “science,” with its aura of objectivity, was instrumental in the rejection by colonial officials (and, gradually, Indians educated and acculturated in Western ways of thinking as well) of customary spatial practices and built forms as “slum”-like and in need of complete reform. Instead, they favored forms that resembled European modernisms, reassuring in their visual completeness. If European artistic and literary representations of historic Delhi had helped to create the identity – in European imagination – of a picturesque and exotic old city, mired in superstition, European “science” constructed it as destitute and desperate in a manner that was convincing for both Europeans and Western-educated Indians. Spatial forms that at least looked like the modernisms of Europe implicitly expressed the hope of achieving it – whether or not that was possible or reasonable.

In the application of universal principles of “scientific” design, local ways of living and working, people’s social networks, economic interdependencies and cultural significance were all irrelevant. The new developments did not factor in extended families, nor did they assign room for mosques or temples. Regardless of (very low) car ownership, streets wide enough to accommodate automobiles marched across the landscape in sweeping curves and straight lines. A new

centralized building process, rigid and unyielding, expected to put down completed forms and spaces which would be inhabited as they were built, replacing a more flexible and negotiated approach that responded to changes in the residents' life-cycle. Yet, despite all attempts to create a visible distance from the existing cityscape of the walled area, the resemblance to European forms was more implied than real. The density that the DIT followed was of 100 persons/acre in Delhi, while 20 persons/acre was determined as appropriate in contemporary British planning for the development of Greater London.⁴¹ High densities (relative to European standards), brick and plaster construction with flat roofs, covered verandas on upper levels, openings with lattice work, courtyards, multipurpose rooms, detached bathrooms, and Indian-style toilets crept into the DIT's dwelling unit designs both to allow large margins of profit and to make them more acceptable to local residents. Although some aspects of the DIT projects, in their initial conception, may have had a closer likeness to European models, in their adaptation to local context and in their inhabitation they were soon indigenized (Figure 11.8).

The vision of model living that the projects presented, one that officials believed was universally ideal, was unappealing to the residents of the so-called slums in the walled city. Five years after the DIT's inception in 1936, only 242 houses had been completed, and five years later only 104 of them had been occupied. Residents displayed their disregard for and disagreement with the DIT projects in their lack of cooperation in forfeiting private land for Trust schemes, in their reluctance to inhabit the projects, in persistent land speculation, and through formal protests. Instead of decongesting the areas that officials labeled overcrowded, fresh categories of people moved into the new planned extensions. New immigrants to Delhi came to occupy many of the planned extensions. It was not that the residents perceived conditions in the most crowded parts to be healthy or ideal, but rather that the official solutions were less reasonable.

The new housing developments on the fringes of Old and New Delhi were meant to create ideal environments for the consummate citizens of British India. Prevailing environmental determinist views reinforced the idea that an orderly and sanitary environment would create orderly and healthy citizens who owed allegiance to the new nation rather than the communities they were born into. The rhetoric of "improvement" evoked benevolence and obscured the imperial government's multiple hidden agendas that complicated their stated intentions. First was the motivation of an increasingly resource-starved colonial government to raise revenue from its holdings that could be made to yield high returns. This meant the regular monitoring and managing of rents and leases to protect the vast and valuable government land holdings around the walled city from ad-hoc settlement by those they considered as "squatters." In addition to maximizing their returns, the colonial government also aimed to promote commerce and free enterprise. Second, the colonial power wanted to present itself as a benevolent government committed to advancing the welfare of citizens, but individual officials were faced with choosing between their multiple allegiances and the opportunities for personal gain. Third, having built a brand new city that supposedly symbolized



Figure 11.8
View of a street adjacent
to where the wall had
been near Ajmeri
Darwaza. The DIT
developed this area as
part of the Delhi Ajmeri
Gate Scheme.

progress, and “rational” governance, it aspired towards a society of citizens who were good workers, healthy, morally upright and obedient during a time of growing nationalism in India. This included efforts to police insurgents effectively. Finally, the British had a particular architectural vision of modernity in Delhi that was based on the normative ideals of modern residential architecture and planning in metropolitan Britain.

The residents for their part, however, were not passive recipients of these “civilizing projects.” As they struggled to find a place for themselves in the tumult of economic and political change, citizens responded variously by maximizing personal gain, making their homes secure, predictable and productive in their own



Figure 11.9
The DIT development of Western Extension Karol Bagh. Note that the streets are narrow but paved and rectilinear. Apartments with shared stairwells were the norm. Over the years owners have modified the standardized designs to suit their needs. Encroachment on to the public street is visible for some of the buildings.

terms. Those who could took advantage of the new opportunities to make financial gains through investment in real estate. As they claimed public space, or added to or modified their buildings, residents also used their own logic to develop a set of spaces most functionally advantageous to them and that offered continuity to their existing socioeconomic structures and culturally familiar ways of living (Figure 11.9). However, with reduced community control, focusing on private gain, they sometimes sacrificed public good. Faced with the rules and regulations of a new

administrative and legal system, residents were quick to understand them and find ways of working them to their advantage. The rapid and uncontrolled growth of the urban fabric was also evidence of increasing investment and the growing power of petty entrepreneurs. Nominally following the law or manipulating it, appropriating space by stealth, negotiating compensations, pressurizing inspectors, screaming injustice and seeking the protection of the law were only some of the many different methods that people used to confront the government and drive a compromise, even if it was not the outcome residents desired. Where the tidy rows of houses did develop, personalized and added to, they obscured the original intent of their creation. In their unpredictable and negotiated outcome, the planned extensions developed from building processes that partially resembled those already existing in the walled city.

The assumption that good design and effective planning could be accomplished by the simplistic application of “scientific” formulae assumed to be universally valid was erroneous. In its interpretation, science was both cultural and political. Officials neglected to understand the cultural value of dwelling and community for different sections of the local citizenry. In emphasizing the numerical values of density, size, room size, number of stories, and light planes, colonial officials ignored the often dramatic differences in cultural practices and social and economic conditions which governed people’s lives, and the significance, in determining the appropriateness of their dwellings, of extended families, community networks, location near mosques and temples, and accommodation of economic production within the home. Customary house designs in what officers saw as “congested” quarters of the old city also supported home-based industries that included the labor of women and older children. The new designs, as well as their location outside the city, required the separation of home from work and daily transportation beyond their means. Urban policies and housing interventions aimed to reorganize society into classes that were spatially segregated in separate class-based neighborhoods. Further, the creation of modular units grouped into income categories assumed cultural homogeneity and harmony within each of the bands. Far from homogeneity, in Delhi’s society occupation, caste, sect, ethnicity and religion defined people’s identities to create a complex diversity that forms of European modernism could hardly suppress. Finally, the residents found community policing, oversight by neighbors whom they knew, to be a far greater source of security than the surveillance by agents of a government they did not trust.

The colonial agenda of absolute control was to be well served in the layout of the DIT projects. Wide, orthogonal streets, clear boundaries, modular lots and buildings, and the frequent absence of internal courtyards created an environment that was more transparent than the one in the walled city, and hence it was easy for officials to police deviant behavior and insurgency. The DIT and its redevelopments helped to justify the penetration of even the most opaque neighborhoods in the walled area, where official notification of rebuilding enabled surveyors to intrude into private properties and carry out detailed surveys as well as note suspicious activities and materials. Most significantly, the flagship layouts of the DIT zoned out

prostitution, gaming houses, bars, and other activities officials considered injurious either physically or morally. (Ironically, in postcolonial Delhi after independence, many of the planned residential neighborhoods meant to nurture model citizens became centers of subversive activities.)

In the end many of the DIT projects were at least partially completed – some more than others. The designs were modified, scaled back, compromised and adapted in many instances. And most took several years of planning and negotiation before they could even begin, let alone be completed. However, the idea that an architecture and urban design that resembled those of European modernism would eventually result in a similar form of modernity was a very powerful one. It was not only the British who were responsible for declaring their own version of modernity to be the only valid one; Indian nationalists, increasingly powerful players in the movement for independence, were equally adamant about their own version. After India gained independence in 1947, the work of the DIT was given over to the newly established Delhi Development Authority, which brought some of the DIT projects to fruition. But in the years preceding it, the center of Indian political leadership in Delhi had moved out of the walled city to the Civil Lines and the newly developed estates around New Delhi. In a curious inversion where the familiar became strange and the strange became familiar, spaces meant to define ideal subjecthood of the British Empire became spaces for nurturing a new independent republic.

Dominant discourses of reason, science, and rationality as universal located them outside the particularities of place and culture. In the hands of the colonial officials, projects to modernize the city became instruments for furthering the goals of colonialism and constructing oppositional and unequal identities of the rulers and the ruled. The rejection of existing spatial and institutional structures assumed that there was only one right way to do things. New strategies of urban development worked to disband the very institutions that supported existing building processes. While putting in place a codified, formal and transparent structure for urban development, the efforts failed to recognize the plural processes and spatial practices operating at the levels of community and custom. The colonial imperative to dominate combined with the mastery of technology. Together they failed to acknowledge alternative traditions of science and rationality and see them as culturally rooted. Official action to refashion and reform space and society was mediated on the ground by the local: the political motivations of individual officials, cultural perceptions, competing agendas, customary practices and ways of living and building, and the differing logics of motivation or resistance of the people concerned. In the cultural milieu of Delhi, the housing developments were symbolic terrains for negotiating Delhi's indigenous modernities, at once local and global, complex, plural, and the consequence of its particular circumstances.

Notes

Chapter 1: Between Materiality and Representation

- 1 Salman Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, London: Vintage, 1996, pp. 7–9.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 15–16.
- 3 The notion of “space” that we invoke here reflects Henri Lefebvre's influential critique of “everyday life” as the broadly encompassing object of a philosophical investigation that sought to insert itself in-between and thereby challenge the Marxist hierarchy of base (material/economic determinants) and superstructure (conceptual/symbolic value) in the analysis of social production. Translated into English only relatively recently, Lefebvre's work on everyday life and his subsequent related analysis of space as a social production lived in real time, between the abstract and the concrete, have had a pervasive influence in recent critical and theoretical writings in English on architecture and urbanism. See, for example, S. Harris and D. Berke (eds) *Architecture of the Everyday*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997. See also H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991 (originally published in French, 1974); H. Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, vol. 1, trans. John Moore, New York: Verso, 1991 (originally published in French, 1947). Indirectly, Lefebvre's notions of “space” have had a longer and broader influence on contemporary architectural and urban theory through the works of Michel de Certeau, Manuel Castells and David Harvey, among others.
- 4 Kulbhushan Jain, “Realms of Transition: An Essay on the Physical and Cultural Attributes of In-between Architectural Spaces,” *Architecture + Design*, 1987, 81–7; B. V. Doshi, “Between Notion and Reality,” *Architecture + Design*, 1989, 20–3; Kurula Varkey, “The Essence of the Indian Tradition: An Interpretation,” *Architecture + Design*, 2000, vol. 17, no. 4, 98–117. See also Charles Correa's discussion of the dual practical and existential nature of “open to sky spaces” in Indian architecture, in Charles Correa and Kenneth Frampton, *Charles Correa*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1996. For the wider currency of the notion of the “in-between space” in contemporary architectural discourse, see, for example, Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001; and Stephen Cairns (ed.) *Drifting: Architecture and Migrancy*, London and New York: Routledge, 2004.
- 5 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Pantheon, 1978; *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Knopf, 1993. For hybridity in postcolonial cultural theory, see, for example, Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994.

- 6 See the influential multi-volume series of essays on radical modern South Asian historiography published collectively as *Subaltern Studies* by Oxford University Press, through the 1980s and early 1990s, under the general editorship of Ranajit Guha. See also A. L. Stoler and F. Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," in F. Cooper and A. L. Stoler (eds), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997.
- 7 Stoler and Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony."
- 8 See for example: Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976; Anthony D. King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984; Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989; J. Robinson, *Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996; Mathew H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of India, 1765–1843*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997; R. Home, *Of Planting and Planning: The Making of British Colonial Cities*, London: E. & F. Spon, 1997; N. Perera, *Society and Space: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Postcolonial Identity in Sri Lanka*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998; K. Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999. See also G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong (eds), *Postcolonial Space(s)*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997; and Samer Akkash (ed.), *De-Placing Difference: Architecture, Culture and Imaginative Geography*, Adelaide: Centre for Asian and Middle-Eastern Architecture (CAMEA), 2002.
- 9 R. Harris to P. Scriver, email communication, 31 Jan. 2003; Richard Harris, "Development and Hybridity Made Concrete in the Colonies," *Environment and Planning A*, (forthcoming).
- 10 See, for example, R. Fernor-Hesketh (ed.), *Architecture of the British Empire*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1986. Important exceptions to this observation are Mark Crinson's more recent studies of the complex dialectic between politics, means and ideals in the architecture of expatriate British interests in the sphere of British imperial influence, particularly in the Middle East, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996; Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- 11 This literature and its discursive contexts are examined critically in the next chapter. In addition to journal articles and magazines, and a growing number of scholarly theses, the literature in English includes well over 20 book-length works to date wholly or substantially focused on the architecture and urbanism of colonial South Asia: Sten Nilsson, *European Architecture in India 1750–1850*, London: Faber, 1968; Mark Bence-Jones, *Palaces of the Raj*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1973; King, *Colonial Urban Development*; Robert Grant Irving, *Indian Summer: Lutyens, Baker, and Imperial Delhi*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981; Jan Morris, with S. Winchester, *Stones of Empire: The Buildings of the Raj*, New York: Oxford, 1983; Philip Davies, *Splendours of The Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660 to 1947*, London: John Murray, 1985; S. Gupta, *Architecture of the Raj: Western Deccan; 1700–1900*, Delhi: B. R. Publishing Co., 1985; Kamal Khan Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, Singapore: Concept Media, 1985; Philip Davies, *The Penguin Guide to Monuments of India*, vol. II, Islamic, Rajput, European, London: Viking, 1989; G. H. R. Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture: Continuity, Controversy and Change Since 1850*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989; T. R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, London: Faber, 1989; N. Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View Toward The West*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989; C. W. London (ed.), *Architecture in Victorian and Edwardian India*, Bombay: MARG, 1994; C. Taddell, *The History of*

Architecture in India; from the dawn of civilization to the end of the Raj, London: Architecture Design and Technology Press, 1994; Jon Lang, Madhavi Desai and Miki Desai, *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity, 1880–1980*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997; R. B. Lewcock and B. Sansoni, *The Architecture of an Island*, Colombo: Barefoot (Pvt) Ltd, 1998; Vikram Bhatt, *Resorts of the Raj: Hill Stations of India*, Ahmedabad and New York: Mapin, 1998; P. N. Chopra and Prabha Chopra, *Monuments of the Raj: British Buildings in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar*, New Delhi: Aryan Books, 1999; and Rahul Mehrotra et al. (eds), *World Architecture: A Critical Mosaic 1900–2000*, vol. VIII, *South Asia*, New York and Vienna: Springer, 2000. See also the growing number of monographs on the architecture and urban heritage of specific colonial cities, including Yasmeen Lari and Mihail S. Lari, *The dual city: Karachi during the Raj*, Karachi: Heritage Foundation and Oxford University Press, 1996; Nuha Ansari, *Karachi, Edge of Empire: Jewels and Gems of Raj Architecture*, Rawalpindi: Ferozsons, 1997; Sharada Dwivedi and Rahul Mehrotra, *Bombay: The Cities Within*, Mumbai: Book House Pvt. Ltd, 1997; K. and F. Schiffer, *Madras: The Architectural Heritage*, Chennai: Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage, 2003; Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism*, London: Routledge, 2005; Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism, and the Colonial Uncanny*, London and New York: Routledge, 2005; and William Glover, *Making Lahore Modern: Constructing and Imagining a Modern City*, Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2007.

- 12 See for example: P. Rabinow, *French Modern*; Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991; Zeynep Çelik, *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations: Algiers under French Rule*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- 13 This apposite cinematic analogy is attributed to Walter Benjamin, originally, in his influential observations of the urban experience of modern Paris: W. Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, London: Verso, 1974, p. 171, as cited in Kim Dovey, "Dialectics of Place: Authenticity, Identity, Difference," in S. Akkach (ed.) *De-Placing Difference*, pp. 45–52.
- 14 Davies, *Splendours of the Raj*.
- 15 Stuart Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What happens after they are built*, London: Phoenix Illustrated, 1997.
- 16 Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origins of Modern Building Types*, London: Routledge, 1993; Kim Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999. For "space syntax" as a tool for analyzing the "social logic of space," see Bill Hillier, *Space is the Machine: A Configurational Theory of Architecture*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996; and B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- 17 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993; P. Bourdieu and L. J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992. See also Dovey, *Framing Places*, pp. 35–8.
- 18 Markus, *Buildings and Power*, pp. 12–13. For Bourdieu's spatial analogies and their limitations, see Joe Painter, "Bourdieu," in Mike Crang and Michael Thrift (eds), *Thinking Space*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 252–8.
- 19 Dovey, *Framing Places*, p. 1.
- 20 Largely overlooked when his early work was first published, sociologist Anthony King's consistent attention to modes of production and behavior in the analysis of power and cultural mapping in colonial space and society has been influential for several authors of the present volume. See, in particular, King, *Colonial Urban Development*; and King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*. For the framing of power and knowledge in colonial norms and institutions, see Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist*

- Among the Historians and Other Essays*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990; C. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire. The New Cambridge History of India*, vol II.I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; and Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1959.
- 21 Peter Scriver, "Stones and Texts: The Architectural Historiography of Colonial India and its Colonial-Modern Contexts" in the present volume.
 - 22 Stephen Cairns, "The Stone Books of Orientalism," in the present volume.
 - 23 See, for example, Bernard Cohn's historical examination of institutional norms and culture in the framing of everyday life in colonial India, in Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among the Historians*. See also King, *Colonial Urban Development*.
 - 24 Peter Scriver, "Empire-building and Thinking in the Public Works Department of British India," in the present volume.
 - 25 The editors wish to thank Alan Crawford for advice on the relatively late origin of the common label for this influential movement.
 - 26 Vikramaditya Prakash, "Between Copying and Creation: The *Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details*," in the present volume.
 - 27 Arindam Dutta, "Strangers within the Gate: Public Works and Industrial Art Reform," in the present volume.
 - 28 Prakash, "Between Copying and Creation."
 - 29 Paul Walker, "Institutional Audiences and Architectural Style: The Napier Museum," in the present volume.
 - 30 Novel recent research, employing a geographical information systems (GIS) analysis to correlate demographic, historical and spatial data, has shown that the intermingling of indigenous and colonial European elites, at least in major administrative stations such as Poona (Pune), was much greater than has generally been assumed. See Wayne Mullen, *Deccan Queen: A Spatial Analysis of Poona in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2002. See also King, *The Bungalow*.
 - 31 Anthony D. King. *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976. See also Veena Talwar Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow, 1857–1877*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984; Miriam Dossal, *Imperial Designs and Realities: The Planning of Bombay City 1845–1875*, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1991; and Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires, 1803–1931*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.
 - 32 See, for instance, Swati Chattopadhyay, "Blurring the Boundaries: The Limits of 'White Town' in Colonial Calcutta," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 2000, vol. 59, no. 2, 154–79; and her recent book *Representing Calcutta*. See also Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities*; and the respective essays by Chattopadhyay, Hosagrahar and Anoma Pieris in the present volume. It is noteworthy that each of these authors has had a close relationship with the graduate program in architectural history at the University of California, Berkeley, and the cultural "landscape" approach to the study of vernacular environments and the everyday building and dwelling practices that shape these, associated in particular with the work of the historian Dell Upton on the building practices and culture of early colonial America.
 - 33 Chattopadhyay, "Blurring the Boundaries."
 - 34 William Glover, "An Absence of Old England: The Anxious English Bungalow," *Home Cultures*, 2004, vol. 1, no. 1, 61–81.
 - 35 Sylvia Shorto, "A Tomb of One's Own: The Governor's House, Lahore," in the present volume.
 - 36 Soja's notion of "thirdspace" emerges from a study of the "spaces that differences make" in the postmodern city. See Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-imagined Places*, Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996. For "colonial third culture" see: King, *Colonial Urban Development*, pp. 58–66.

- 37 Swati Chattopadhyay, "The Other Face of Primitive Accumulation: the Garden House in British Colonial Bengal" in the present volume.
- 38 Anoma Pieris, "The Trouser under the Cloth: Personal Space in Colonial-Modern Ceylon," in the present volume.
- 39 Jyoti Hosagrahar, "Negotiated Modernities: Symbolic Terrains of Housing in Delhi," in the present volume.
- 40 Anthony D. King, "Rethinking Colonialism: An Epilogue," in Nezar AlSayyad (ed.) *Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise*, Aldershot: Avebury, 1992, p. 342.

Chapter 2: Stones and Texts

- 1 Nancy Stieber, "Architecture Between Discourses," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 2003, vol. 62, no. 2, 176–7.
- 2 See S. Cairns, "The Stone Books of Orientalism" in the present volume.
- 3 Although Fergusson returned to this idea in several of his works, the argument was most clearly stated in a lecture he presented to the Society of Arts in 1866 in which he claimed that Indian architecture could be read like "a great stone book, in which each tribe and race has written its annals and recorded its faith;" Fergusson, *On the Study of Indian Architecture*, London: Department of Science and Art, South Kensington Museum, 1867. For a discussion of Fergusson's equally influential extension of this argument to his claims for the methodological objectivity of photography, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, "The Compulsions of Virtual Representation in Colonial India," in Maria Antonella Pelizzari (ed.), *Traces of India: Photography, Architecture, and the Politics of Representation, 1850–1900*, Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2003, p. 134. See also Vikramaditya Prakash, "Between Objectivity and illusion: Architectural Photography in the Colonial Frame," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 2001, vol. 55, no. 1 (September): 13–20; and Robert Elwall, "James Fergusson (1808–1886): A pioneering architectural historian," *RSA Journal*, 1991, vol. 139 (May), 393–404.
- 4 James Fergusson, *Illustrations of the Rock-Cut Temples of India: Selected from the Best Examples of the Different Series of Caves at Ellora, Ajunta, Cuttack, Salsette, Karli, and Mahavellipore*, London, 1845; Fergusson, *Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*, London, 1847; Fergusson, *An Historical Enquiry into the True Principles of Beauty in Art*, London, 1849; Fergusson, *The Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, London, 1855; Fergusson, *A History of the Modern Styles of Architecture: Being a Sequel to the Handbook of Architecture*, London, 1862; Fergusson, *A History of Architecture in all Countries: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, London, 1865; Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, London: John Murray, 1876.
- 5 Jyoti Hosagrahar, "South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead – History and Modernization," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 2002, vol. 61, no. 3, 355–69. As Hosagrahar reports, a survey of the history curricula in South Asian schools of architecture she conducted in 2001 found that works such as Percy Brown's *Indian Architecture*, vol. 1, *Buddhist and Hindu Periods*, vol. 2, *Islamic Period*, Bombay, 1942, and Satish Grover's *The Architecture of India*, vol. 1, *Buddhist and Hindu*, New Delhi, 1980, and vol. 2, *Islamic*, New Delhi, 1981, along with Fergusson's original history itself, remain typical core texts of the premodern curriculum in many schools. Both Brown and Grover relied closely and uncritically on Fergusson's canon and classifications, substantially adding only to the graphic illustration and three-dimensional interpretation of the content.
- 6 Of broader implications, and yet to be critically examined to my knowledge, was the substantial redeployment of Fergusson's "Indian" theories and methods in Banister Fletcher's hugely influential but problematic *History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, London, 1896. While there is wide consensus on the importance of reading

- Fergusson's theories in the light of his own time and criteria, I take the view that such an influential discourse had structural implications for later scholarship that need to be addressed in context as well, including the concerns of current postcolonial discourse. For a cogently argued difference of opinion in this regard, see G. H. R. Tillotson (ed.), *Paradigms of Indian Architecture: Space and Time in Representation and Design*, London: Curzon, 1998, pp. 1–2.
- 7 Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996, pp. 42–8. For the roles of “evolution” and biological analogies in nineteenth-century architectural theory, see Peter Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture*, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1965.
 - 8 Crinson, *Empire Building*, pp. 42–8.
 - 9 Fergusson articulated the definitive version of his problematical theories on the racial nature of development and differences in architecture in the introduction to volume 1 of his *History of Indian Architecture* (1876). However, the theory was rehearsed in several of his earlier publications as well.
 - 10 Crinson, *Empire Building*, p. 45.
 - 11 For an early statement of Fergusson's widely repeated distinction between “true” and “imitative” styles, see: Fergusson, *Illustrated Handbook of Architecture*, pp. xxv–xxvi. Fergusson developed his argument for the didactic significance of this distinction in his 1866 lecture to the Society of Arts: Fergusson, *On the Study of Indian Architecture*.
 - 12 See for example: James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles*. In this work, first published in 1862, 14 years earlier than his definitive *History of Indian Architecture*, Fergusson did in fact devote the better part of a chapter to the topic of European colonial architecture in India. His appraisal of the respective built legacies of the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French and English was not altogether disapproving, but framed within a taxonomy and an encyclopedic account of the global diffusion of modern “European” tendencies that tacitly precluded any idea that these buildings could also be regarded as “Indian” architecture.
 - 13 James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, 2 vols, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1972 (reprint of 2nd edn, J. Burgess (ed.), London: John Murray, 1910), vol. 2, pp. 324–8.
 - 14 For a discussion and critique of the broader discourse on the cross-cultural transgressions of the architecture of nawabi Oudh that ensued from Fergusson's comments, see: G. H. R. Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture: Continuity, Controversy and Change Since 1850*, London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989, pp. 6–17.
 - 15 For the “Company” phase of British building practices in India, and its antecedents in other parallel and earlier colonial architectures, see Sten Nilsson, *European Architecture in India 1750–1850*, London: Faber, 1968.
 - 16 For two of the most useful and critically engaged discussions of the Indo-Saracenic tendency, albeit with limitations discussed later in this chapter, see Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture*; and Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, London and Boston: Faber, 1989.
 - 17 Vibuti Sachdev and Giles Tillotson, *Building Jaipur: The Making of an Indian City*, London: Reaktion Books, 2002, pp. 108–16. See also Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*, pp. 46–56; and Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*, pp. 77–90.
 - 18 See, in particular, Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*; and Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*. See also Marukh Tarapor, “Growse in Bulandshahr,” *Architectural Review*, 1982, vol. 172 (September), 44–52; Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View to the West*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989; and Philip Davies, *Splendours of The Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660 to 1947*, London: John Murray, 1985.
 - 19 Marukh Tarapor's engaging article of 1982 on the quixotic campaigns of F. S. Growse

- appears to have been the catalyst for much of the subsequent literature on Growse and his fellows-in-arms – Kipling and later Havell. As an ICS officer in district administration, Growse's critical opinions on standard colonial building practices provoked sufficient official disapproval that he could only publish his voluminous memoranda on his architectural convictions and alternative experiments in the building field in limited, privately printed editions. See Tarapor, "Growse in Bulandshahr."
- 20 In Growse's caustic estimation, the PWD was a "chartered anti-aesthetic society." As quoted in Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*, p. 86.
 - 21 Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*, pp. 60–2.
 - 22 Growse and, later, Jacob were not content merely to document and comment on traditional Indian building styles and craft. They both undertook ambitious building campaigns of their own in hybrid styles. Jacob was sufficiently successful in these designs, India-wide, to be foisted upon Edwin Lutyens, upon the latter's appointment in 1912 to head up the design team for New Delhi, as the most knowledgeable living British authority on the Indian styles. Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*, p. 229.
 - 23 Col. S. S. Jacob, *Jeyapore Portfolio of Architectural Details*, 12 vols, vols 1–6, London: Bernard Quaritch, 1890; vols 7–12, London: Griggs & Sons, 1894–1913. See Vikram Prakash's critical discussion of Jacob's *Portfolio* in his contribution to the present volume: V. Prakash, "Between Copying and Creation." See also Sachdev and Tillotson, *Building Jaipur*, pp. 97–127.
 - 24 The possibilities and dimensions of such a deeper syntactic analysis have been well articulated, for instance, in Tom Markus's studies of the typical "modern" institutional buildings of nineteenth-century Britain – the templates on which the planning and functional programs, if not the styles, of many of the Indo-Saracenic buildings of late Victorian India were modeled. See Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origins of Modern Building Types*, London: Routledge, 1993; and Markus, "Buildings as Classifying Devices," *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 1987, vol. 14: 467–84.
 - 25 Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*, p. 52. See also T. R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
 - 26 Alexander Cunningham, the first director of the ASI (1862–83) provided Fergusson with much of the photographic material for his later publications. James Burgess, the second director of the ASI, edited the expanded two-volume second edition of Fergusson's history, incorporating additional sections on the architectures of East and South East Asia as well. See James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, 2nd edn.
 - 27 Although conservation initiatives were undertaken independently as early as 1875 by individuals such as F. S. Growse, and the local government of the Northwest Provinces and Oudh, under Sir John Strachey's governorship, it was not until 1898 that the archaeological surveys were uniformly and officially given responsibility for conservation. Rajat Ray, *Politics and Principles of Conservation of Architectural Monuments in British India*, unpublished Master's dissertation, Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, University of York, 1992, pp. 176–7.
 - 28 In 1911, Gordon Sanderson, an ASI officer, had conducted a survey of contemporary public architecture in northern India, focusing primarily on building practices and patronage outside the formal government sector. His extensively illustrated report made a strong claim for the demonstrable vitality of the traditional building crafts of India. This proved to be a useful polemic for both the crafts advocates – who were then lobbying for a greater role of traditional craftsmen in the design and building of the new capital project at Delhi – and for more laissez-faire-minded representatives of the status quo within the PWD system. Gordon Sanderson, *Types of Modern Buildings*, Allahabad, 1913. See also Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*, pp. 163, 214–15; Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian*

- Architecture*, pp. 110–25; G. Stamp, “British Architecture in India, 1857–1947,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 1981, vol. 129 (May), 371.
- 29 In fact, the actual physical conservation works continued to be carried out by the provincial PWDs, but under the clear authority of the ASI, which duly reported such activities under its published annual reports beginning in 1902. Thus, “on paper,” as Rajat Ray observes, conservation became a monopoly of archaeology. Rajat Ray, *Politics and Principles of Conservation of Architectural Monuments in British India*, pp. 57–8.
- 30 P. Scriver, “Complicity and Contradiction in the Office of the Consulting Architect to the Government of India, 1903–1921,” in J. Willis and P. Goad (eds), *Loyalty and Disloyalty in the Architecture of the British Empire and Commonwealth*, selected papers from the refereed proceedings of the annual conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand (SAHANZ), Auckland, 2–6 October 1996, Melbourne: Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, 1997, pp. 93–101.
- 31 Similar institutional dynamics in the construction of essentialist notions of cultural difference are observed in the case history of the Imperial and Colonial Exhibition staged in London, in 1886, in Swati Chattopadhyay, “A Critical History of Architecture in a Post-Colonial World: A View from Indian History,” *Architronic*, 1997, vol. 6, no. 1 (May), (e-journal accessed 20 April 2006, <http://architronic.saed.kent.edu/v6n1/>).
- 32 It is noteworthy, however, that the comparatively massive trove of routine administrative proceedings and related reports and records bearing on design and construction issues that comprise the archives of colonial government departments such as the PWD have been given surprisingly little methodical scrutiny until recently.
- 33 John Summerson, in the foreword to Sten Nilsson, *European Architecture in India 1750–1850*, London: Faber, 1968.
- 34 Ranajit Guha, “Not at Home in Empire,” *Critical Inquiry*, 1997, vol. 23 (Spring), 482–93. See also P. Scriver, “Empire-Building and Thinking” in the present volume.
- 35 Hosagrahar, “South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead”; Vikramaditya Prakash, *Chandigarh’s Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in Postcolonial India*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2002; and Vikram Bhatt and Peter Scriver, *After the Masters: Contemporary Indian Architecture*, Ahmedabad and New York: Mapin, 1990. See also Jon Lang, Madhavi Desai and Miki Desai, *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity, 1880–1980*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997; and James Belluardo and Kazi Ashraf (eds), *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, New York: Architectural League of New York, 1998.
- 36 See, for example, the extensive new *Portfolio* of measured drawings and details of “traditional architecture” – a centenary tribute to Swinton Jacob’s monumental *Jeypore Portfolio* – prepared by faculty and students of the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, for the 1985 catalog and exhibition at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris: R. Rewal, J.-L. Veret, and R. Sharma (eds), *Architecture in India*, Paris: Electa, 1985.
- 37 Bhatt and Scriver, *After the Masters*.
- 38 Maharaja of Baroda with V. Fass, *The Palaces of India*, New York: Vendome Press, 1980; Robert Grant Irving, *Indian Summer: Lutyens, Baker, and Imperial Delhi*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981; Jan Morris, with S. Winchester, *Stones of Empire: The Buildings of the Raj*, New York: OUP, 1983; Philip Davies, *Splendours of The Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660 to 1947*, London: John Murray, 1985; S. Gupta, *Architecture of the Raj: Western Deccan; 1700–1900*, Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 1985; Kamal Khan Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, Singapore: Concept Media, 1985; Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View to the West*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989; G. H. R. Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture: Continuity, Controversy and Change Since 1850*, New Haven and London: Yale, 1989; T. R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain’s Raj*, London: Faber,

- 1989; C. Tadgell, *The History of Architecture in India: from the dawn of civilization to the end of the Raj*, London: Architecture Design and Technology Press, 1990.
- 39 See also Morris and Winchester, *Stones of Empire*; Gupta, *Architecture of the Raj: Western Deccan*; Kamal Khan Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*; and, more recently, Tadgell, *The History of Architecture in India*.
- 40 See Baroda and Fass, *The Palaces of India*; Gupta, *Architecture of the Raj*; Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*; and P. N. Chopra and Prabha Chopra, *Monuments of the Raj: British Buildings in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar*, New Delhi: Aryan Books, 1999. To my knowledge, apart from a token treatment by Chopra and Chopra, there are no comparable widely available surveys of colonial architecture in present-day Bangladesh or Sri Lanka. While the documentary publications by Barbara Sansoni, Ronald Lewcock and collaborators on the residential vernacular of colonial Ceylon go some way toward filling this gap, the public architecture of British Ceylon has only been addressed rigorously, albeit peripherally, by the planning historian, Nihal Perera. See N. Perera, *Society and Space: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Postcolonial Identity in Sri Lanka*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998; R. Lewcock, B. Sansoni and L. Senanayake, *The Architecture of an Island: The Living Legacy of Sri Lanka*, Colombo: Barefoot, 1998.
- 41 Irving's exhaustive mining of pertinent government records regarding the construction of Imperial Delhi is a notable exception. Irving, *Indian Summer*.
- 42 Among the most influential studies by nonspecialists have been the numerous annotated catalogs regarding architectural drawings and early "views" of India and its buildings by traveling European artists published by Mildred Archer, former curator of the Prints and Drawings Department of the Oriental and India Office Collection of the British Library.
- 43 A. D. King, *Colonial Urban Development*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976; King, *The Bungalow*, London: Routledge, 1984. See also King, *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity*, London: Routledge, 2004.
- 44 Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*.
- 45 Although substantially concerned with the intentions informing the architectural forms and tendencies of postcolonial India, the relatively more recent study, *Architecture and Independence* (1997), of Lang, Desai and Desai is noteworthy for the considerable new data it provides on previously undocumented work by the emerging architectural profession in late-colonial India. Working outside the programs and prerogatives of the colonial regime, these firms and individuals – including some of the first registered Indian architects in private practice, and various expatriate (non-British) Europeans – played an important role in preparing the ground for the future urban and residential development by commercial builders that would substantially define the postcolonial built environment. Limited by their synoptic survey format, however, Lang, Desai and Desai have only opened the door to the fruitful in-depth research and analysis of these "in-between" facets of formal architectural production in colonial-modern India that remains to be done.
- 46 Jan Morris, *Spectacle of Empire*, New York: Doubleday, 1982; Morris and Winchester, *Stones of Empire*. See also Morris's lead essay in Robert Fernor-Hesketh (ed.), *Architecture of the British Empire*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1986; and, more recently, Jan Morris, *Building Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: FormAsia, 1997.
- 47 Morris and Winchester, *Stones of Empire*, p. 1.
- 48 Ibid., pp. 1–2
- 49 See, in particular, Irving, *Indian Summer*; and Davies, *Splendours of the Raj*. Regardless of their narrower disciplinary concerns, these specialist studies of colonial architectural art were equally a product and symptom of the same conjunction of neo-conservative values and neo-liberal economics that defined the Thatcher–Reagan watershed in late-twentieth-century cultural politics.

- 50 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, edited with an introduction by Jan Morris, Boston: Little, Brown, 1981. See also Jan Morris, *The Venetian Empire*, New York: Harcourt Trade Publishers, 1980.
- 51 In spite of their apparent affinities, Fergusson's notion of the "phonetic" status of buildings, and Ruskin's sense of the "voice" with which some buildings may be said to "speak," were, by Ruskin's own assertion, fundamentally at odds with each other. See *Stones of Venice*, vol. 1, appendix 13.
- 52 See, for instance, Dell Upton, "Architectural History or Landscape History?," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 1991, vol. 44 (August), 195–9.
- 53 Morris and Winchester, *Stones of Empire*, p. 32.
- 54 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 1: *The Foundations*, especially Chapter 1. See also the excellent comparative analysis of Ruskin, Fergusson and others in Crinson, *Empire Building*, pp. 37–71.
- 55 For a classic and still compelling analysis of the architectural surface of the emerging phenomenon of late-modern capitalism in the 1980s, see geographer David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989. See also King, *Spaces of Global Cultures*.
- 56 For maharajas' palaces and their interior furnishings and decoration in particular, see Baroda and Fass, *The Palaces of India*; Susanne Slesin, *Indian Style*, New York: Crown Publishers, 1990; and Anne Garde, *Salon Indien*, Paris: Éditions Hazan, 1996.
- 57 See Arindam Dutta's discussion of these and analogous historical spectacles of India in A. Dutta, *Designing the Present: The Aesthetic in the Age of Global Reproduction*. New York: Routledge (forthcoming).
- 58 Arindam Dutta, "Inimical Intimacies: Identity and Architecture in the Indian Theatre," in V. Prakash (ed.), *Theatres of Decolonization: (Architecture) Agency (Urbanism)*, Proceedings of The Second Other Connections Conference, Chandigarh, India, 6–10 January 1995, College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Washington, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 55–74.
- 59 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Pantheon, 1978; Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Knopf, 1993.
- 60 Worthy of special mention is the exemplary work of architect Rahul Mehrotra and associates in spearheading projects and policies for the conservation of Bombay and its various culturally discernible subdistricts. See S. Dwivedi and R. Mehrotra, *Bombay: The Cities Within*, Mumbai: India Book House Pvt. Ltd, 1995; and the related publications program of the Urban Design Research Institute (UDRI), Mumbai. For comparably sophisticated and comprehensive documentation of colonial Madras, see K. Kalpana and F. Schiffer, *Madras: The Architectural Heritage*, Chennai: Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage, 2003. See also Nalini Thakur, "Mehrauli, Delhi," *Architecture + Design*, 1989, vol. 6, no. 1 (November), 95–104, and related technical publications on colonial cultural landscapes, including military cantonments, by Thakur and students in the Graduate Architectural Conservation program of the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi.
- 61 Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*, chapters 4 and 5, pp. 55–140; Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*, chapter 2, pp. 26–59.
- 62 Davies, *Splendours of the Raj*, p. 198. See also London, *Architecture in Victorian and Edwardian India*; Stamp, "British Architecture in India," and Colin Amery, "Public Buildings," in Fermor-Hesketh (ed.), *Architecture of the British Empire*, pp. 104–47.
- 63 Davies, *Splendours of The Raj*, pp. 15, 198–9.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 16. Davies's otherwise engaging and empirically valuable survey maintains such a narrow focus on its formal and biographical concerns that he almost completely avoids any substantive analysis of the colonial situation in which these designs were realized.

- 65 Sachdev and Tillotson, *Building Jaipur*, p. 112.
- 66 Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles*.
- 67 For a classic analysis of the formal and cognitive points at issue in that seminal debate, see Peter Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture*.
- 68 E. B. Havell, *Indian Architecture; Its Psychology, Structure and History from the first Muhammadan Invasion to the Present Day*, London: John Murray, 1913, pp. 230–1.
- 69 Morris and Winchester, *Stones of Empire*, p. 32.
- 70 Metcalf, *Imperial Vision*.
- 71 Ibid. See also Bernard S. Cohn, "Representing Authority in Victorian India," in E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 165–210.
- 72 As Paul Walker discerns in his contribution to this collection, colonial-modernity aspired to represent itself in forms of what the anthropologist Paul Rabinow has called a "middling modernism" – a carefully balanced tableau of difference merely veiling a putative "sameness" in modernity. See also P. Scriver, "Empire-Building and Thinking," in the present volume. For Rabinow's original argument, see Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989, p. 347.
- 73 Tillotson, *Tradition of Indian Architecture*, p. 61. Giles Tillotson, "George S. T. Harris: an Architect in Gwalior," *South Asian Studies*, 2004, vol. 20, 9–24.
- 74 Gulsum Baydar, "The Cultural Burden of Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 2004, vol. 57, no. 4 (May), 19–27; Paul Walker, "Vagrancy: Asia and the Pacific in Sir Banister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture*," in S. Cairns and P. Goad (eds), *Building, Dwelling, Drifting: Migrancy and the Limits of Architecture*, papers from the 3rd "Other Connections" Conference, The Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne, June 1997, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 356–62.
- 75 While formal and typological analyses of traditional Indian architecture and urbanism have formed an integral component of the curriculum in many Indian schools of architecture for at least a generation, the limited allied scholarship has focused primarily on formal order and pattern languages. See, for example, Klaus Herdeg, *Formal Structure in Indian Architecture*, New York: Rizzoli, 1990; Kurula Varkey, "The Essence of the Indian Tradition: An Interpretation," *Architecture + Design*, 2000, vol. 17, no. 4, 98–117; Yatin Pandya, "Spatial Narratives in Traditional Indian Architecture: An Interpretation for Contemporary Relevance," *Architecture + Design*, 2001, vol. 15, no. 4 (July–August), 106–10; Yatin Pandya, *Concepts of Space in Traditional Indian Architecture*, Ahmedabad: Mapin, 2005, and the publications series of the Vastu–Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, Ahmedabad. These "traditions" have yet to be subjected to other, theoretically engaged modes of analysis that might address the hybrid typologies of the colonial-modern era as well.

Chapter 3: The Stone Books of Orientalism

- 1 An earlier version of this essay was first published as S. Cairns, "The Stone Books of Orientalism," *Fabrications: Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand*, 2001, vol. 11, no. 2 (September), 73–85.
- 2 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London: Penguin, 1995.
- 3 J. J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought*, London: Routledge, 1997, p. 20.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 20–1.
- 5 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 12.
- 6 Ibid., pp. 5 and 22.

- 7 Ibid., p. 12.
- 8 Thomas R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p. 19.
- 9 David Kopf, "The Historiography of British Orientalism, 1772–1992," in Garland Cannon and Kevin Brine (eds), *Objects of Enquiry: The Life, Contributions, and Influence of Sir William Jones (1746–1794)*, New York: NYU Press, 1995, pp. 155–6.
- 10 Timothy Brennan ("The illusion of a future: Orientalism as traveling theory," *Critical Inquiry*, 26, 3, 558–68) is sceptical of the foundational place Said is given in the history of postcolonial studies. He suggests that although it has come to seem thoroughly commonsensical to take Said to be the progenitor of postcolonialism, the differences between his work and that of postcolonial studies as it developed are so marked that this association cannot be sustained. See Anthony King's *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 51 and 62–3 for further discussion on this question.
- 11 See, for example, Homi Bhabha's *Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994; and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, London: Routledge, 1993.
- 12 James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 17.
- 13 Brennan, "The illusion of a future."
- 14 Said cited in Brennan, "The illusion of a future," p. 566.
- 15 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 72.
- 16 Ibid., p. 22.
- 17 Edward W. Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, London: Vintage, 1991, p. 3.
- 18 Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics*, London: Verso, 1997, p. 41.
- 19 See, for example, Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory*; Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, St. Leonards, New South Wales: Allen & Unwin, 1998; and Inge E. Boer (ed.), *After Orientalism: Critical Entanglements, Productive Looks*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003.
- 20 Such a project necessarily takes on the ritualistic atmosphere of a foundational act. As Robert Young notes, the critique of Said's *Orientalism* has come to function "as the act or ceremony of initiation by which newcomers to the field assert their claim to take up the position of a speaking subject within the discourse of post-coloniality." Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 284. As I will argue below, this foundational critical work, however ritualized, has yet to be undertaken in relation to architecture. Young's point usefully underlines the iconic aura and shibboleth status that has come to be attached to *Orientalism*. Said adapted and partially revised the thesis of this book following its publication in *Culture and Imperialism*, in his "Afterword," appended to the 1995 edition of *Orientalism*, and in his "Orientalism Reconsidered" in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000. These usefully elaborate and refine themes first broached in *Orientalism*, but it is the iconic standing of this book and its consequences for the discipline of architecture that concern me here.
- 21 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 14.
- 22 I am using "cultural production" here in a generic sense to refer to the general process and output of cultural work – film, literature, art, architecture, etc. See Pierre Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993, for a substantive analysis and theorization of the social, economic and political embeddedness of these various forms of cultural production.
- 23 See, for instance, Mary Poovey's *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

- 24 See Kopf's ("The Historiography of British Orientalism") comment below for another articulation of this point.
- 25 See Oleg Grabar's review of the *Europa und der Orient: 800–1900* exhibition held in Berlin in 1989. He is critical of the relative inability of the exhibition curators to take Said's critique of orientalism seriously: "The organizers of the exhibition, although apparently aware of 'Orientalism,' more or less as defined by Edward Said in 1978, hardly considered the twin questions of authenticity and identity which are at the core of the Orient's own contemporary discourse." Oleg Grabar, "Europe and the Orient: An Ideologically Charged Exhibition," in Oleg Grabar (ed.), *Muqarnas: An Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture*, Leiden: Brill, 1990.
- 26 Hasan-Uddin Khan, "The Impact of Modern Architecture on the Islamic World," in Hubert-Jan Henket and Hilde Heynen (eds), *Back from Utopia: The Challenge of the Modern Movement*, Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2002, p. 175.
- 27 See Mark Crinson's discussion of Thomas's idea of the "project" as an anthropological concept as a means of developing the orientalism thesis, in M. Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, London: Routledge, 1996.
- 28 Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, London: Faber, 1989.
- 29 Crinson, *Empire Building*. Also see Crinson's essay in Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts (eds), *Orientalism's Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography*, Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002.
- 30 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. xi.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 33 Crinson, *Empire Building*, p. 5.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 35 Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*. Cambridge: Polity, 1994.
- 36 Nicholas Thomas cited in Crinson, *Empire Building*, p. 6.
- 37 Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, and "Le Corbusier, Orientalism, Colonialism," *Assemblage*, 17, 1992, 8–77.
- 38 Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- 39 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 12.
- 40 Kopf, "The Historiography of British Orientalism," p. 156.
- 41 Metcalf cited in Kopf, "The Historiography of British Orientalism," p. 156.
- 42 John MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. xvii.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 46 Relatedly MacKenzie argues that it is popular art in particular which is most likely to produce this "counter-hegemonic discourse." Said is also seen to be limited on this count as "he concentrates almost exclusively on elite texts," *ibid.*, p. 14.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- 48 *Ibid.*
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- 51 Although, as MacKenzie notes, prominent strands of orientalist influence were found in the architectures of leisure.
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- 53 *Ibid.*

- 54 Ibid., pp. 101–2.
- 55 Fergusson cited in MacKenzie, *Orientalism*, p. 95.
- 56 MacKenzie, *Orientalism*, p. 95.
- 57 S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones: A Study in Eighteenth-Century British Attitudes to India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968, p. 91.
- 58 William Jones, “The Third Anniversary Discourse (on the Hindus),” *Asiatick Researches*, 1, 1806, 422–3.
- 59 Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*, p. 50.
- 60 Burton Feldman and Robert D. Richardson (eds), *The Rise of Modern Mythology, 1680–1860*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972, p. 269. See also Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones*, and Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*.
- 61 Feldman and Richardson, *The Rise of Modern Mythology*, pp. 268–9.
- 62 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 22.
- 63 Ibid., p. 78.
- 64 Ibid., p. 78.
- 65 Jones, “The Third Anniversary Discourse (on the Hindus),” p. 424.
- 66 Ibid., p. 427.
- 67 William Chambers, “Some Account of the Sculptures and Ruins at Mavalipuram (a place a few miles North of Sadras, and known to Seamen by the name of the Seven Pagodas),” *Asiatick Researches*, 1, 1806, pp. 145–70.
- 68 Ibid., pp. 157–8.
- 69 Said, *The World, the Text and the Critic*, p. 3.
- 70 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 20.
- 71 Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972, p. 104.
- 72 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 71.
- 73 Jones, “The Third Anniversary Discourse (on the Hindus),” p. 421.
- 74 Chambers, “Some Account of the Sculptures and Ruins at Mavalipuram,” p. 157.
- 75 Ibid., p. 157.
- 76 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, London: Allen Lane, 1977.
- 77 Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, London: Athlone, 1988.
- 78 Ibid., p. 33.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Ibid., p. 34. The Panopticon is significant because it has an analytic and diagnostic function in excess of its status as architectural fact. As Deleuze notes, “Foucault stresses that the Panopticon had a single unsatisfactory definition as long as it was viewed only as an ‘architectural and optical system’.” Ibid., p. 37.
- 81 Foucault (*Discipline and Punish*, p. 205) cited in Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 34.
- 82 Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 35.

Chapter 4: Empire-Building and Thinking in the Public Works Department of British India

- 1 Evidence of Sir Charles Trevelyan to Fawcett’s Parliamentary Committee on Indian Finance of 1873, in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1873, vol. XII, pp. 99–100, as quoted in Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 287 (1st edn, 1959).
- 2 E. W. C. Sandes, *The Military Engineer in India*, Chatham: The Institute of Royal Engineers, 1935, vol. II, p. 347.
- 3 In addition to the tide of popular and nostalgic histories of the architectural “splendours of the Raj” published in recent decades, the engineering triumphs of the British in India

received a special dispensation in the final accounting of the colonial project. See, for example, Maud Diver, *The Unsung: A Record of British Services in India*, Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1945. For instances of the passionate reception and celebration of the infrastructural legacies of the Raj in postcolonial India, see J.N. Sahní, *Indian Railways: One Hundred Years, 1853–1953*, New Delhi: Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, Government of India, 1953; Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Century, 1857–1947*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1961; and Rahul Mehrotra and Sharada Dwivedi, *Anchoring a City Line: The History of the Western Suburban Railway and its Headquarters in Bombay*, Mumbai: Eminence Designs, 2000.

- 4 I am speaking here of an institutional “middle ground” similar to what I perceive as the “middling modernism” of colonial technocratic agency that Paul Rabinow has addressed in his work on the French in North Africa and Indochina: P. Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989. This was a middle stratum in a vertical hierarchy dominated above by an aloof and self-consciously metropolitan elite, but interfacing directly with the subaltern cadre of technically and clerically engaged middle classes through which the labors of the department were executed for the everyday “public” of colonial subjects. It was also a site of intersection between different metropolitan discourses, parallel to and sometimes contradicting the official line of command, where, as Stoler and Cooper explain, the critical historian may focus “... on the contingency of metropolitan-colonial connections and its consequences for patterns of imperial rule.” F. Cooper and A. L. Stoler (eds), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997, p. 1. While Foucault’s focus on the “heterotopic” institutional buildings and discourses of modernity as primary sites for the critique of knowledge–power relations underpins much of the more recent “postcolonial” research in this vein, the earlier and substantially parallel insights and methods of anthropologist Bernard Cohn and historians such as Chris Bayly and Eric Stokes on cognate South Asian “sites” of everyday institutional intersections between elite power and local knowledge (and vice versa) were the original springboard for the present inquiry. See Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990; C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire, The New Cambridge History of India*, vol II.1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; and Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*.
- 5 The voluminous official *Proceedings of the Public Works Department* and associated design documentation are now preserved in the National Archives of India and the local government records collections of the respective states of postcolonial India. Unless otherwise indicated, the arguments articulated in this essay build on the extensive survey and analysis of those records documented in Peter Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control: A Cognitive Historical Study of Architectural Design and Planning in the Public Works Department of British India, 1855–1901*, Delft: Publikatieburo Bouwkunde, Technische Universiteit Delft, 1994. The present essay outlines a number of key arguments developed more fully in Peter Scriver, *The Scaffolding of Empire: Public Works and Architecture in Colonial India, 1855–1921* (forthcoming).
- 6 William Hubbard, *Complicity and Conviction: Steps toward an Architecture of Convention*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980. See, in particular, chapter 2: “Games as a Model,” pp. 50–66.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 51–2.
- 8 The game analogy explored here is posited with a view to its contingent affinities with Pierre Bourdieu’s game-like notions of “*habitus*” and “*fields*” of production/play, but not, I must qualify, as a case study in applied Bourdieuan sociology. Indeed, the formally institutionalized design practices of the British Indian colonial administration addressed here could be regarded as the very antithesis of the “principle of the conductorless

orchestration" that Bourdieu is concerned with, "which gives regularity, unity and systematicity to practices even in the absence of any spontaneous or imposed organization of individual projects." But what I hope to discern in this case is, rather, an inherent dualism in such formal institutional agency. The objective codification of norms, rules and procedures may function alternately, I argue, in both positivist and heuristic manners, as "structuring structures" in Bourdieu's sense, or as a practical "middle ground," as I propose, that mediates in-between political intentions and cultural conventions in the production and reproduction of the conceptual norms, physical forms, and spatial structures of particular social environments. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990, pp. 53–9.

- 9 P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 214. My use of Bourdieu here also reflects a particularly relevant application in Roderick J. Lawrence, "Learning from colonial houses and lifestyles," in Mete Turan (ed.), *Vernacular Architecture: Paradigms of Environmental Response, Ethnoscapes*, vol. 4, Aldershot: Avebury, 1990, pp. 219–60.
- 10 Jon Elster, *Explaining Technical Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 69–87.
- 11 The term "satisfice" was originally coined by the decision-theorist, Herbert Simon, from the words "satisfy" and "suffice". "Evidently organisms adapt well enough to *satisfice*," he wrote in 1956, "[t]hey do not in general optimize." The term has more recently found its way into architectural and environmental design thinking: "[Satisficing] solutions are inelegant, incomplete, impermanent, inexpensive, just barely good enough to work." As discussed in Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What happens after they are built*, London: Phoenix Illustrated, 1997, pp. 164–5.
- 12 Elster, *Explaining Technical Change*, p. 77.
- 13 J. G. Medley, "Anglo-Indian Architecture," *Professional Papers on Indian Engineering*, 1864, vol. 1, no. 3 (May).
- 14 The historical significance if not the critical value of the polemical critiques of the PWD by British advocates of the traditional decorative arts and building crafts of India have been somewhat overstated in recent accounts, I would argue. In the official records of the PWD, at least, they are all but inaudible. See the respective accounts in G. H. R. Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture: Continuity, Controversy and Change Since 1850*, London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989; and Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, London and Boston: Faber, 1989.
- 15 Formally established at Roorkee in northern Uttar Pradesh in 1847, the Thomason College of Engineering was an institutional legacy of the Ganges Canal Project (1841–54), an irrigation scheme of heroic proportions that had assembled many of the best engineering experts and resources in India at Roorkee to design and execute the monumental head-works for the canal at nearby Hardwar. The more straightforward task of extending the canal across the dry plains of the Ganges was to be the job of locally recruited assistant engineers who were brought to the works at Roorkee for a basic course in civil engineering and hands-on training in hydraulics. The wider need for such a course was quickly recognized, and a permanent college was founded in 1847. Despite the dominance of the civil and mechanical engineering professions in the technical development of nineteenth-century Britain, professional training back "home" was still firmly rooted in the apprenticeship tradition. Arun Kumar, "Colonial Requirements and Engineering Education: The Public Works Department, 1847–1947," in R. MacLeod and D. Kumar (eds), *Technology and the Raj: Western Technology and Technical Transfers to India, 1700–1947*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995, pp. 216–32; K. V. Mital, *History of Thomason College of Engineering*, Roorkee: University of Roorkee Press, 1986. See also D. R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in*

- the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- 16 Hubbard, *Complicity and Conviction*, pp. 52–4.
 - 17 A violent “Rebellion” in the (Indian) “sepoy” ranks of the British East India Company’s Army in 1857 that initiated a widespread popular uprising across much of northern India between 1857 and 1858 has generally been recorded as the “Mutiny” by imperial historians, whereas nationalist historians have described it as India’s first war of Independence. It was, of course, both.
 - 18 T. Roger Smith, “Architectural Art in India,” *Journal of the Society of Arts*, 1873, vol. 21 (March 7), 279.
 - 19 Ibid. The emphasis is mine.
 - 20 George Franklin Atkinson, *Curry and Rice on Forty Plates: or The Ingredients of Social Life at “Our Station” in India*, London: Day and Son, 1859, pp. 17–18. As quoted in Barbara Harlow and Mia Carter (eds), *Imperialism & Orientalism: A documentary sourcebook*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1999, p. 227. Evidently this piece also appeared in *The Delhi Sketchbook*, a popular newspaper that circulated among “civilians” (civil administrators) of the East India Company in the final years of the Company era. See Michael Edwardes, *Bound to Exile: The Victorians in India*, London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1969, p. 64.
 - 21 Jeremy Bentham had numerous admirers and acolytes within the civil administration, and the technical and military services of the East India Company and succeeding Crown administration, who regarded colonial India as an ideal arena for experiments in Utilitarian social reform. The classic study of these philosophical threads in modern Indian political history is Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*; see also C. H. Phillips and M. D. Wainwright (eds), *Indian Society and the Beginnings of Modernization, c. 1830–1850*, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1976.
 - 22 Sanjay Srivastava coins the term “techno-scientific landscape” in his anthropological study of the role of an elite educational institution, its social order and the actual spatial order of its buildings and campus, in the construction of the secular-modern “citizens” who comprise India’s neo-colonial plutocracy: S. Srivastava, *Constructing Post-Colonial India: National Character and the Doon School*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998.
 - 23 Veena Talwar Oldenburg has explored this paradox at the level of local city administration, showing how such “progress” in municipal works was instrumental to the security of the ostensibly “non-interventionist” regime, and coercive and manipulative with regard to the Indian populace: V. T. Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. The complexities and contradictions of the case of colonial medicine and public health measures in British India indicate similarly paradoxical aspects of progressive science within the very particular historical framework of colonial rule. See D. Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993.
 - 24 Francis Yeats-Brown, *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, New York, 1930, pp. 4–5, as quoted in Ranajit Guha, “Not at Home in Empire,” *Critical Inquiry*, 1997, vol. 23 (Spring), 482–93.
 - 25 Guha, “Not at Home in Empire,” 482–3.
 - 26 Such systematization in the Indian PWD differed significantly, however, from the formally devised and legally constituted colonial settlement “systems” such as the Wakefield system that shaped the planning of contemporary Australasian new towns such as Adelaide, Wellington and Christchurch or, much earlier, the propagation of Iberian Renaissance architecture and urbanism in the Latin-American New World through the remarkably comprehensive and prescriptive sixteenth-century royal ordinances known as the “Laws of the Indies.” The PWD’s standards were at most an attempt to establish standard practice; not an ordinance as such.

- 27 The definitive contemporary study of the origins and global cultural implications of the Anglo-Indian "bungalow" remains A. D. King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.
- 28 To paraphrase Henry Glassie's cognitive theory of vernacular building processes, as discussed in Bill Hillier, *Space is the Machine: A Configurational Theory of Architecture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 44–5.
- 29 Among several comparatively recent contributions to the literature that have revisited the controversial issue of "standard plans" in India's colonial architectural history, see Tillotson, *The Tradition of Indian Architecture*.
- 30 A relatively straightforward explanation of the intended use of standard plans in ordinary departmental practice was offered by Lt. Col. C. H. Dickens, PWD Secretary to the Government of India through the particularly intensive period of PWD building activity in the second half of the 1860s: "Standard Plans are only intended to show the general arrangement and extent of accommodation to be provided, and should *not* be considered in the light of 'working drawings' as showing structural details which should be invariably followed. Such details should be left to be worked out by the officers of the Department under the orders of their local governments." PWD Circular No. 76 of 1865: (Mly. Wks.) Simla, 15 May 1865 (my emphasis). For an excellent illustration of both the stylistic variety and the formal coherence that this policy enabled, as actually applied in the design of "standard" two-story wards and barrack blocks in different parts of the country, see Vikram Bhatt, *Resorts of the Raj: Hill Stations of India*, Ahmedabad and New York: Mapin, 1998, pp. 132–5.
- 31 The case of Lt. Col. Crommelin and the Military Works Branch of the PWD is examined in depth in Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control*, pp. 436–42.
- 32 Public Works Department Reorganization Committee Report, 3 vols, Calcutta: Government Press, 1917, vol. 1, p. 43. For the implications of design and procedural standardization for the economy of information within the bureaucratic workings of the British Indian PWD, see Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control*, pp. 452–70.
- 33 "Establishment" was the standard bureaucratic term for "personnel" in the jargon of British colonial administration.
- 34 Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress*, p. 318; Government of India, *The Imperial Gazetteer of India: The Indian Empire*, vol. 4, *Administrative*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1907, p. 310.
- 35 For the implications of such "Departmentalism" in the production and agency of the PWD, see Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control*, pp. 472–86, and 500–13. For the political economy of professional vs. bureaucratic structures of knowledge and their spatial analogues, see Bill Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984; and Margali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.
- 36 William Thomas Thornton, *Indian Public Works and Cognate Indian Topics*, London: Macmillan, 1875, p. 169.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid., p. 172.
- 39 Diver, *The Unsung*, p. 282.
- 40 For the original and still compelling articulation of this thesis, see Francis Hutchins, *The Illusion of Permanence: British Imperialism in India*, New York: Princeton, 1967.
- 41 As the anthropologist Sanjay Srivastava proposes, the buildings they designed had ultimately come to function as mere "... ideographs of difference embossed upon a colonial techno-scientific landscape." Srivastava, *Constructing Post-Colonial India*, p. 67.
- 42 William Hubbard, *Complicity and Conviction*, p. 64.

Chapter 5: "Strangers within the Gate"

- 1 F. Ashton, "The Salt Industry of Rajputana," in *Journal of Indian Art*, vol. 9.
- 2 See Arindam Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: Design in the Age of its Global Reproducibility*, New York: Routledge, 2006.
- 3 *Journal of Indian Art*, vol. 2, July 1888, p. 23.
- 4 George Watt, *A Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, vols 1–6, Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1889.
- 5 I have addressed this topic in a detailed investigation of the influence of German organicism on the DSA's curricular imperatives. See Arindam Dutta, "Architecture Upside Down; The Morphotropy of Value," in *The Bureaucracy of Beauty*.
- 6 For a comparative study of salt production in the metropole, see Brian Didsbury, "Cheshire saltworkers," in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *Miners, Quarrymen and Saltworkers*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.
- 7 These binaries, articulated by the younger Pugin in his didactic polemic, *Contrasts*, London: Charles Dolman, 1841 (first published 1836), were given further theoretical weight in Raymond Williams's classic work a century later (*The Country and the City*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1973).
- 8 Sigfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1948. See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, London: Blackwell, 1989.
- 9 Marx's critique of Adam Smith and his ilk is available throughout his work; however, the most comprehensive treatment of the subject is to be found in the fourth volume of *Capital*, published later as *Theories of Surplus Value*. Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1999.
- 10 The early Marx uses the phrase in describing crude communism, or the first phase of communism, which unwittingly affirms the dominance of private property by its simple negation. The nuanced distinctions that Marx makes in the potentials of different kinds of communism have uncanny resonance with the course of future events. Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" in *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, New York: Penguin Classics, 1992, p.346.
- 11 Royal Society of Arts, *Reports of Artisans selected by a Committee appointed by the Council of the Society of Arts to visit the Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867*, London: Bell and Daldy, 1867. *Society of Arts Artisan reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878*, London: Sampson, Low & Co., 1879.
- 12 See for instance, Marx's essay "The Future Results of British Rule in India," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975–, vol. 12, pp. 218–20.
- 13 John M. Hurd's entry in the *Cambridge Economic History of India*, a tome which is remarkable, as Irfan Habib has put it, for writing a history of colonialism in India "without perceiving colonialism," offers us a deadpan account of the effects of the railway system as a simple extension of the metropolitan model. Thus, we are told, railways increased commodity traffic between regions, initiated exports, tripled imports, created regional specialization in raw materials, spurred industrialization, and generally integrated India with the imperial economy. At the cusp of independence, we are led to believe, India has been set securely on the path to full-scale modernization; only one single line gives away the possibility of a contrary storyline: "Railways led to increased agricultural output, the growth of modern industry and mining, new jobs – although many jobs were lost – the redistribution of the urban population, higher incomes for some segments of the population ["accentuate the positive"], and numerous other economic changes. Yet, in the long run, these changes did not alter the basic structure of the economy." John M. Hurd, "Railways," in Dharma Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge*

- Economic History of India*, vol. 2: c. 1757–c. 1970, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p.761. Also see Irfan Habib, "Studying a Colonial Economy – Without Perceiving Colonialism," in his *Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception*, New Delhi: Tulika Press, 1995.
- 14 François Crouzet, "France," in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds), *The Industrial Revolution in National Context: Europe and the USA*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p.55.
 - 15 Richard Price, *Masters, Unions and Men; Work control in building and the rise of labour, 1830–1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p.19.
 - 16 Similar patterns are observed in the furniture industry as well. See Hew Reid, *The Furniture Makers: A History of Trade Unionism in the Furniture Trade, 1865–1972*, Oxford: Malthouse Press, 1986.
 - 17 For two otherwise very competent accounts, see Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850–1922: Occidental Orientations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; and Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View from the West*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
 - 18 See Janaki Nair, "Labour Legislation and the Woman Worker," chapter 4 in her *Women and Law in Colonial India; A Social History*, New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1996.
 - 19 Peter Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control: A Cognitive Historical Study of Architectural Design and Planning in the Public Works Department of British India, 1855–1901*, Delft: Publikatieburo Bouwkunde, Technische Universiteit Delft, 1994.
 - 20 As quoted in Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 287 (first published 1959). See also Scriver, *Rationalization, Standardization, and Control in Design*, p. 78. [Editors' note: see also Scriver, "Empire-Building and Thinking," in the present volume.]
 - 21 Emphasis added. [Richard Strachey], *Report of a Committee on the Classification of Public Works Expenditure and the Various Returns Exhibiting the Operations of the Department which are required by the government of India*, Calcutta: [John Gray], 1858, p. 3.
 - 22 A[rthur] Cotton, *Public Works in India, their importance; with suggestions for their extension and improvement*, 2nd edn, London: W. H. Allen, 1854.
 - 23 John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, London: Macmillan, 1936, and other editions.
 - 24 See Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes: The Economist as Savior, 1920–1937*, New York: Penguin Books, 1992, chapter 15, "Firing at the Moon," and chapter 16, "Whose General Theory."
 - 25 Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes: Fighting For Freedom, 1937–1946*, New York: Viking, 2000, p. 503.
 - 26 Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes, New York: Penguin Classics, 1990. See section 3, "The Progressive Production of a Relative Surplus Population or Industrial Reserve Army," and section 4, "Different Forms of Existence of the Relative Surplus Population. The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation," in chapter 25, "The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation."
 - 27 George Christopher Molesworth Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India*, South Kensington Museum Art Handbooks. London: Chapman and Hall, 1884.
 - 28 Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India*, vol. 1, pp.151–2; emphasis added.
 - 29 See Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, pp. 786, 788.
 - 30 Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, p. 786.
 - 31 William Thomas Thornton, *Indian Public Works and Cognate Indian Topics*, London: Macmillan, 1875, p. 167.
 - 32 The point has to be emphasized here that this form of famine is fundamentally a *modern* form of famine: "[The Report on the North-Western Provinces famine of 1868–9 ...]

drew pointed attention to the fundamental factors in the situation that distinguished the modern famines from those of the old days. These were the steep rise in the prices of foodgrains caused by exports resulting from the development of railways and the recent emergence of a class of labour subsisting on money wages, which during a famine suffered from the effects of high prices of food on the one hand, and the loss of employment and income, on the other." B. M. Bhatia, *Famines in India: A Study in Some Aspects of the Economic History of India*, New York: Asia Publishing House, 1967, p. 78 (first published 1963).

- 33 Indian Famine Commission, 1881, Part III, British Parliamentary Reports (1881), p. 51.
- 34 Ernest Binfield Havell, *Reports submitted by Mr. E. B. Havell during the years 1885–1888 on the Arts and Industries of Certain Districts of the Madras Presidency*, Selections from the records of the Madras Presidency; New (Reserve) Series, no. VI. Madras: Superintendent, Government Press, 1909.
- 35 Ernest Binfield Havell, "The Art Industries of the Madras Presidency; Peasant Jewellery," in *Journal of Indian Art*, April 1891, vol. 4, no. 34.
- 36 B. P. Adarkar (Labour Investigation Committee, Government of India), *Report on Labour Conditions in the Central Public Works Department*. Delhi: [Manager of Publications], 1946. The report was part of a series prepared on various industries between 1943 and 1946, evaluating the British record on labor practices. All of these reports strongly criticized the labor practices employed all across colonial India.
- 37 [Editor's note: Lord Curzon, Viceroy of British India (1899–1905), had spearheaded a vigorous escalation of the heritage conservation agenda of the Archaeological Survey of India, and was among the most sophisticated and headstrong of imperial technocrats with respect to the aesthetics and orchestration of cultural representation. See Scriver, "Stones and Texts" in the present volume.]
- 38 See W. E. Gladstone Solomon, *Mural Paintings of the Bombay School*, Bombay: The Times of India Press, 1930, p. 5.
- 39 Dutta, "Congress: Gandhi at the World Exhibitions," in *The Bureaucracy of Beauty*.

Chapter 6: Between Copying and Creation

Please note the following abbreviations:

JPWD = Jeypore Public Works Department

RSAJ = Rajasthan State Archives, Jaipur

NAI = National Archives of India, New Delhi

- 1 John L. Kipling, "Indian Architecture of To-Day," *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, 1886, no. 3, 5.
- 2 For instance, when the Maharaja gifted Jacob Rs. 5000 as "a token of appreciation," the latter sought permission from the British Resident in Jaipur to accept it. After consultation with the higher authorities, the Resident ruled that Jacob could not accept the gift, citing a regulation that prohibited colonial officers from accepting any form of remuneration other than their salaries. In NAI, Foreign, Genl B, July 1873, nos. 164–66.
- 3 NAI, Foreign, Genl B, November 1870, nos. 60–61.
- 4 We find the Under-Secretary to the Government of India making special remarks, while forwarding the Rajpootana Administrative Report, to note the "valuable services rendered" by Jacob which is duly recorded in the printed transactions at the other end. NAI, Foreign, Political A, March 1872, nos. 60–78.
- 5 JPWD Report, 1872, 3.
- 6 In one of the discussions on Jacob's promotion the Imperial PWD notation was that the "system of control exercised by the PWD in British territory should *not* be extended to native states except where British Government contributes to the undertaking." NAI, Genl B, November 1870, nos. 60–61.

- 7 Jacob was evidently quite proud of his efforts in this vein, boasting in an official report of 1872 that the "fact that detailed working drawings are made from [prescribed] designs by the lads in the school, who a few months ago knew nothing, speaks for itself." JPWD Report, 1872.
- 8 NAI, Sessional Notes, 1891, 129.
- 9 Peter Scriver, "Empire-Building and Thinking in the Public Works Department of British India," in the present volume. According to Scriver, "the question of traditional Indian 'craft' in building just did not arise as an issue of general concern, or even conscious consideration, until the early twentieth century. Even then it arises indirectly, by way of new concerns with conservation and the more central question of architecture itself, as differentiated from mere building for necessity. Intriguing as their individual arguments and agency were, nineteenth-century critics such as Jacob or Kipling were speaking from the margins of the PWD system, and the record suggests that they were simply inaudible." From an email exchange between Peter Scriver and the author in October 1999.
- 10 Scriver, "Empire-Building and Thinking."
- 11 Kipling, "Indian Architecture of To-day," 1886, p. 2.
- 12 Havell: "[T]he official architect sits in his office at Simla, Calcutta, or Bombay, surrounded by pattern-books of styles – Renaissance, Gothic, Indo-Saracenic, and the like – and, having calculated precisely the dimensions and arrangement of a building suited to departmental requirements, offers for approval a choice of the 'styles' which please him or his superiors, for clothing the structure with architectural garments in varying degrees of smartness, according to the purpose for which it is intended, at so much per square foot." Anticipating latter-day modern architecture's rhetoric on the subject, Havell argued that the issue of "styles" was superfluous to "truly beautiful" architecture; which was only a product of "changes of time, place, men and conditions of life – vital things not the unrealities of fashion and taste." Quoted in Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, 1989, Berkeley: University of California Press, p.165.
- 13 The discussion of Fergusson here is drawn from Vikramaditya Prakash, "Between Objectivity and Illusion: Architectural Photography in the Colonial Frame," *JAЕ Journal of Architectural Education*, September 2001, 13–20.
- 14 Albeit with some reservations. See Peter Scriver, "Stones and Texts" in the present volume.
- 15 While discussing the contemporary history of the presidency schools of art, Tapati Guha-Thakurta argues that the students were "drilled into Western academic standards of representational accuracy, precision and technical finesse, with the best employment prospects in British India ... What became increasingly important ... was less the revival of the traditional hereditary craftsmen, and more the training of a new stratum of skilled, semi-clerical professionals, who could easily be absorbed within the expanding British services." Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *The Making of a New "Indian" Art: Artists, aesthetics and nationalism in Bengal, c. 1850–1920*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 59. Guha-Thakurta's assessment, I suspect, accurately accounts for the development of most of the art schools that were training grounds for employment in the Public Works Department of British India. And it is plausible to assume that to a certain extent Jacob's concentration on drafting may have been driven – although he was mostly independent of them – by a sidelong glance at the Imperial authorities, if nothing else as an example of the "proper" utilization of a colonial institution. In that latter enterprise, drafting contained important ideological dimensions as epistemology.
- 16 NAI, Sessional Notes, 1891, 129.
- 17 RSAJ, G–12–02. The emphasis is mine.
- 18 John Ruskin, *The two paths : being lectures on art and its application to decoration and manufacture, delivered in 1858–9*, New York: Wiley, 1885, p. 19.

- 19 See Arindam Dutta's discussion of the South Kensington Museum and its ideologies regarding craftwork in "Strangers within the Gate" in the present volume.
- 20 Ruskin, *The two paths*, p. 19.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 22–3.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Thomas H. Hendley, *London Indo-Colonial Exhibition of 1886. Handbook of the Jeypore Courts*, Calcutta, 1886, p. 86.
- 25 Transference should be distinguished from simple projection, such as the desires of the colonial patrons (for "traditional Indian" craftwork) being straightforwardly projected upon the Indian artisans as what the colonizers willfully believe and thereby anticipate are the (traditional/natural) desires of the artisans themselves.
- 26 Later Hendley notes that the workmen had never left India, and notes that the point was to show that they were "wanted in Kabul and even distant England." Hendley, *London Indo-Colonial Exhibition of 1886*, p. 87. This is like the contemporary "Festivals of India," in which in the traditional section the "typical" Indian craftsmen are taken over the world, with their wares, to promote the sale of Indian goods. The state is quite clearly trying to cash in on, and promote, the Western conception of the "typical" Indian, as promoted by the fabled tales of the Raj and the tour books. The craftsmen who work in these festivals do the "typical" thing because that pays for their dinner.
- 27 I am here drawing on Homi Bhabha's argument. In Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in Ferguson *et al.* (eds), *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture*, New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1991, pp. 71–87.
- 28 JPWD Report, 1895, p. 7.
- 29 RSAJ, PWD–6–3. In 1895, when asked for means to "encourage local stone carvers" of Jaiselmer by Col. H. B. Abbott, Resident, Western States, Jacob again suggested the making of a Portfolio. He prepared an estimate and even sent three draftsmen who, in two months, collected 296 full-size paper impressions, and 45 pencil sketches of details. Work was started on the Portfolio, but when only nine plates were done, this project was shelved. JPWD Report, 1895. Similarly the Archaeological Survey of India published collections of architectural drawings, but these too found few takers.
- 30 RSAJ, G-4–64.

Chapter 7: Institutional Audiences and Architectural Style

- 1 Visitor numbers for the museums discussed here can be found in the following annual publications: for the Madras Government Central Museum, in *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency*; for the Napier Museum, in *Report on the Administration of Travancore* and *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency*; for the Baroda Museum, in *Report on the Administration of the Baroda State*.
- 2 Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 7–8.
- 3 Chisholm was born probably in 1840, and went to India to work at the Public Works Department of the Bengal Government in Calcutta. He won a competition staged by the Government of the Madras Presidency in 1864 for the designs of Presidency College and the Senate House of Madras University. See *Manual of the Administration, Madras Presidency*, Madras: Government Press, 1886, vol. 1, p. 375; and Thomas Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, London: Faber, 1989, p. 58. He became Consulting Architect in 1869 and stayed in that position until 1886: *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1885–86*, Madras: Government Press, 1886, p. 118, Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library (hereafter,

OIOC) V/10/216. In 1888, he won a competition held for a new municipal office building in Bombay, but his design was not built. See "First Premiated Design for Municipal Offices, Bombay," *The Builder*, vol. 55, no. 2387, 3 November 1888, 322. Chisholm was appointed to the state service of Baroda in 1889, having already designed the Baroda College buildings there in the early 1880s: see *Report on the Administration of the Baroda State for the Official Year ending 31st July 1890*, printed at Bombay, 1893, p. 73, OIOC V/10/793; and R. Fellowes Chisholm, "New College for the Gaekwar of Baroda, with Notes on Style and Domical Construction in India," *Transactions of the RIBA*, 1882/3, 141–6. He worked on several major public buildings there, particularly the Baroda Museum. Chisholm appears to have spent long stretches of time back in England during the 1890s. He retired fully from India probably in 1900, the year he went on the RIBA retired list. He resumed practice in 1902, retired again in 1912, and died in 1915. For obituaries, see *Journal of the RIBA*, vol. 22, 1915, 427; and *The Builder*, vol. 108, 1915, 528.

- 4 R. F. Chisholm, *The Napier Museum, Trevandrum*, Madras: Madras Mail Press, 1873. See also Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 63.
- 5 Chisholm, *The Napier Museum*.
- 6 John Ruskin, "The Lamp of Life," chapter 5 of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds), *The Works of Ruskin*, vol. 8, London: George Allen: 1903 (first published 1849); "The Nature of Gothic," chapter 6 in *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 2, in Cook and Wedderburn (eds), *The Works of Ruskin*, vol. 10, London: George Allen: 1904 (first published 1853).
- 7 Trevor Garnham, *Oxford Museum*, London: Phaidon, 1992.
- 8 *The Press*, 9 May 1878, 2.
- 9 See Roger Neich, *Painted Histories*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1994.
- 10 James Stack, "An account of the Maori House attached to the Christchurch Museum," read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 5 August 1875, *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, vol. 8, 1875, 172–6.
- 11 Paul Walker, "The 'Maori House' at the Canterbury Museum," *Accessory Architecture Proceedings*, Auckland: School of Architecture, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 21–30.
- 12 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1876–77*, Madras: Government Press, 1878, p. 101, OIOC V/10/207.
- 13 R. F. Chisholm, "Indian Industrial Development," *Journal of the East India Association*, vol. 42, New Series no. 51, July 1909, 2–5.
- 14 Chisholm, "Indian Industrial Development," p. 6.
- 15 R. F. Chisholm, "Architecture in Madras," *The Builder*, 5 June 1869, 449; see also Metcalf, p. 62.
- 16 Matters to do with building contracts involving the Consulting Architect, and the budget of his office, were reported under Public Works in the Production and Distribution chapter.
- 17 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1875–76*, Madras: Government Press, 1877, p. 432, OIOC V/10/206.
- 18 "Public Works – General Branch," *Manual of the Administration, Madras Presidency*, Madras: Government Press, 1886, vol. 1, p. 375.
- 19 "Public Works – General Branch," *Manual of the Administration, Madras Presidency*, vol. 1, p. 375. Metcalf (p. 63) describes the Senate House as incorporating Byzantine elements; Philip Davies describes it as Saracenic "conceived symmetrically in a Byzantine manner," in *Splendours of the Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660–1947*, London: Murray, 1985, p. 195; Giles H. R. Tillotson finds elements in the Senate House from Deccan, Moorish, Persian, and municipal Victorian architecture. See Tillotson, "Orientalizing the Raj: Indo-Saracenic Fantasies," *MARG*, vol. 46, no. 1, 1994/5, 17.
- 20 Napier, "Modern Architecture in India," *The Builder*, vol. 28, no. 1438, 27 Aug 1870,

- 680–3. The final part is published as “Architecture for India,” *The Builder*, vol. 28, no. 1440, 10 September 1870, pp. 722–3.
- 21 Napier, “Modern Architecture in India,” p. 682.
 - 22 Napier, “Modern Architecture in India,” p. 682.
 - 23 Napier, “Architecture for India,” p. 723.
 - 24 Metcalf outlines the historical relationship of British power and the Princes of Arcot, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 59.
 - 25 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 46.
 - 26 Letter from Ballard to Dewan, 10 April 1872, Kerala State Archives.
 - 27 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1875–76*, Madras: Government Press, 1877, p. 10, OIOC V/10/206.
 - 28 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 65.
 - 29 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1880–81*, Madras: Government Press, 1881, p. 258, OIOC V/10/211.
 - 30 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 65. The Post and Telegraph is described as in “the Hindoo-Saracenic style” in the *Manual of the Administration, Madras Presidency*, vol. 1, p. 375.
 - 31 See Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, particularly chapters 3 and 4; Davies, *Splendours of the Raj*, chapter 8; and Davies, *The Penguin Guide to Monuments of India*, vol. II, *Islamic, Rajput, European*, London: Viking, 1989, pp. 88–91.
 - 32 Tillotson suggests that Chisholm’s work in Indian states differed from that he did in Madras through being more mindful of local sources; see Tillotson, “Orientalizing the Raj,” p. 19. But the stylistic range in Chisholm’s Baroda work is just as wide as that of his work in Madras based in Indian stylistic precedents.
 - 33 Chisholm, “Indian Industrial Development,” p. 7.
 - 34 Dan Cruickshank (ed.), *Sir Banister Fletcher’s A History of Architecture*, 20th edn, London: Architectural Press, 1996, p. 1266. Silva may be following Davies, who describes the building as “an eloquent essay in Victorian Gothic,” *Splendours of the Raj*, p. 195; and as “an inventive piece of tropical Gothic,” in *The Penguin Guide to Monuments of India*, vol. II, p. 584.
 - 35 Chisholm, *The Napier Museum*, p. 2.
 - 36 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 64.
 - 37 Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, chapter 7.
 - 38 Chisholm, “New College for the Gaekwar of Baroda,” 141–6.
 - 39 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1877–78*, Madras: Government Press, 1879, p. 322, OIOC V/10/208.
 - 40 *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, during the year 1881–82*, Madras: Government Press, 1882, p. 230, OIOC V/10/212.
 - 41 Gyan Prakash, “Science ‘Gone Native’ in Colonial India,” *Representations* no. 40, Fall 1992, 154.
 - 42 Thomas Markus, *Buildings and Power*, London and New York: Routledge, 1993, p. 171.
 - 43 *Administration Reports of the Madras Presidency for the official year 1859–60*, Madras: H. Smith, 1860, p. 19, OIOC V/10/193.
 - 44 *Report on the Administration of Travancore for the years M.E. 1048–A.D. 1872–73 and M.E. 1049–A.D. 1873–74*, p. 130, OIOC V/10/2061.
 - 45 The museum collections at Trivandrum were “classified and arranged” in the new museum building in April 1880. *Report on the Administration of Travancore for the years M.E. 1055–A.D. 1879–80*, p. 52, OIOC V/10/2062.
 - 46 *Museum Administration Report*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1936–7, p. 1, Kerala State Archives.
 - 47 *Museum Administration Report*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1936–7, p. 2; see also *Report of the Trivandrum Museum and Public Gardens for the Year M. E. 1078–A. D. 1902–1903*.

- 48 *Museum Administration Report*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1937–8.
- 49 Prakash, pp. 167–8.
- 50 A. Aiyappan, "The Scope of Provincial Museums," *Journal of Indian Museums*, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1945, 31.
- 51 The Napier Museum was built during the reign (1860 to 1880) of Rama Varma I, the first of Travancore's rulers to bear the title Maharajah. Sir T. Madhava Rao, Dewan 1858–72, undertook major administrative reforms continued by his successor Sashaiah Sastri. The Napier Museum was considered to be among Sastri's major achievements. See V. L. Sastri (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Madras Presidency and the Adjacent States*, Madras: The Oriental Encyclopaedia Publishing Company, 1921, pp. 218–21. Rao's role in reforms of the Baroda government is explained in the entry on Baroda in vol. 3, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910, pp. 417–18. On the beginning of the Baroda Museum see *Report on the Administration of the Baroda State for the Official Year ending 31st July 1890*, printed at Bombay, 1893, p. 60, OIOC V/10/793.
- 52 *Museum Administration Report*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1936–37, pp. 4–5.
- 53 *Canterbury College Annual Report for 1910*, p. 25, University of Canterbury Archives, Christchurch.
- 54 *Guide to the Collections in the Canterbury Museum*, Christchurch, 1906, pp. 218–19.
- 55 See Paul Walker, "The Imperial Museum Survey," in *In the Making: Architecture's Past*, Proceedings of the 18th annual conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, Darwin: SAHANZ, 2001, pp. 132–41.
- 56 For example, in *The Museum and Public Gardens Administration Reports* for 1928–29 and 1933–34.
- 57 *Museum Administration Reports*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1935–36 and 1936–37.
- 58 *Museum Administration Report*, Government Napier Museum, Trivandrum, 1942–43.
- 59 See S. F. Markham and H. Hargreaves, *The Museums of India*, London: Museums Association, 1936. S. H. Prater, curator of natural history at the Prince of Wales Museum, in 1945 wrote a briefing document on which the new building for the natural history collections at Trivandrum would be based; Prater, *Report on the Natural History Museum*, Trivandrum: Government Press, 1945, Kerala State Archives.
- 60 S. F. Markham and W. R. B. Oliver, *A Report on the Museums and Art Galleries of Australia and New Zealand*, London: The Museums Association, 1933, pp. 78–9, 86 and 93.
- 61 *Canterbury College Annual Report for 1933–34*, p. 28.
- 62 *Canterbury College Annual Report for 1912*, p. 26.
- 63 Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment*, Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 1989, p. 347.
- 64 I would like to acknowledge the support of a University of Melbourne Research Career Establishment Grant that allowed me to make a first trip to Indian museums, and of a Discovery Grant from the Australian Research Council which has allowed the research to develop.

Chapter 8: A Tomb of One's Own

OIOC = Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library

- 1 I am grateful to Tim Barringer and Jim Wescoat for their helpful comments on an early draft of this paper.
- 2 B. Cohn, "Representing Authority in Victorian India," in E. J. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 165–210.

- 3 See Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, chapters 3 and 4.
- 4 For the first part of this project, see Sylvia Shorto, "Public Lives, Private Places: British Houses in Delhi, 1803–1853," Ph.D. dissertation, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2003.
- 5 Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter," *Winterthur Portfolio*, no. 17, spring 1982, 1–19.
- 6 Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," in *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 102 ff. In this regard, Bhabha's argument extends Anthony King's concept of colonial "Third Culture," somewhere between metropole and indigenous culture; A. King, *Colonial Urban Development*, London: Routledge, 1976, p. 74.
- 7 Homi K. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," in Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, pp. 85 ff.
- 8 Ibid. See also Guy Brett, "Being Drawn into an Image," *Oxford Art Journal*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1991, 3–9; and Masood Khan, "Cultural Transfers: The Repossession of Architectural Form," *Environmental Design*, vol. 12, nos. 315/16, 1994/5, 84 ff.
- 9 Cited by Syad Muhammad Latif, *Lahore: History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities*, reprinted Lahore: Oriental Publishers, 1981, p. 88 (first published 1892).
- 10 Mughal rulers spent a good part of each year outside their cities, either on campaigns, or on royal progresses to shrines or hunting parks. As a result of this peripatetic way of life, parallels have been drawn between fixed Mughal planning and Mughal tent encampments. See, among others, Alina Macneal, "The Stone Encampment," *Environmental Design*, vols 1–2, 1991, 36 ff.
- 11 An earlier city had existed there, but little is known of Lahore's building history before it fell to the conquering Mughals. What we do know is summarized in *The Walled City of Lahore*, Lahore Development Authority/PEPAC, 1988, pp. 1–7. See also Samuel Noe, "Old Lahore and Old Delhi: Variations on a Mughal Theme," *Urbanism Past and Present*, vol. 12, no. 6, 1981, 1–20.
- 12 Abu'l Fazl, quoted in Anis Nagi (ed.), *Ancient Lahore*, Lahore, 1860, p. 98.
- 13 See Kanhayya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Lahori*, Lahore, 1884, p. 32.
- 14 See Ganesh Das, *Char Bagh-i-Punjab*, unpublished MS, trans. as *Early Nineteenth Century Punjab*, Amritsar: Guru Nanak University, 1975, pp. 29, 115. See also Nagi, *Ancient Lahore*, p. 99. British descriptions of a barren landscape were common, with soldiers later referring to Mian Mir cantonment as "mean" Mir.
- 15 For an analysis of institutionalized planning and architectural design by the Department of Public Works in India after 1854, see Peter Scriver, "Rationalization, Standardization and Control in Design," Ph.D. dissertation, Delft Technical University, 1994, in particular pp. 172–4, for the role of public works in the pacification of the Punjab.
- 16 Punjabi Provincial Archives of Pakistan, ser. # 827.
- 17 Some other riverside Mughal cities (Surat or Agra, for example) had both an inner and an outer town, and sometimes both were walled or moated for security. It has been suggested, in part because of the extent of building on its fringe, that the city of Lahore was perhaps once organized this way, though I have found no evidence of an outer wall or ditch. See M. Baqir, *Lahore Past and Present*, New Delhi: B. R. Publishing, 1985.
- 18 This is noted on a map of the city drawn by T. E. King and dated 1846. A copy is held in the British Library, Oriental and India Office Map Division.
- 19 Lessons learned in both Agra and Delhi, where attempts to settle in sub-imperial palace structures within the dense Mughal urban fabric were soon abandoned for more open, suburban spaces around these cities. See Shorto, "Public Lives."
- 20 Commonly referred to as Anarkali's tomb after a romantic description in the writings of William Finch, who was in Lahore close to the time of its construction, this is perhaps the tomb of Sahib-e-Jamal, a wife of Jahangir, who died in 1599. See Catherine Asher, *The Architecture of Mughal India*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 118. See also

- Ahmed Nabi Khan, in *Journal of Central Asia*, vol. 3, no. 1, July 1980, pp. 151–65. From March 1851 until 1891 Anarkali's tomb was used as a Protestant church by the British community. It now houses the collections of the Punjabi Provincial Archives of Pakistan, and is used as a reading room and a museum.
- 21 Latif, *Lahore*, p. 187.
 - 22 For a detailed study of this topic, see Jean-Marie Lafont, *La présence française dans le royaume Sikh du Penjab*, Paris, 1992. Lafont's arguments are summarized in English in *Indika: Essays in Indo-French Relations, 1630–1976*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2000, pp. 205–14.
 - 23 For an illustration of this, see the watercolor painting by Imam Bakhsh of General Court's House, Lahore, now in the collection of the *Musée national des Arts asiatiques-Guimet* and published in Susan Stronge (ed.), *Arts of the Sikh Kingdom*, London: V&A Publications, 1999, p. 143. Court's wife lived in a separate, new house beside the tomb.
 - 24 Evidence for this is to be found in the *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*.
 - 25 Some accounts suggest that the two generals lived on the same property, with Ventura (and/or his legendary harem) occupying the Anarkali tomb; others, that they lived in the same house.
 - 26 Jacquemont, *Letters*, quoted in Lafont, *Indika*, p. 252. The mural paintings were also described by William Barr in 1839, "... [it] may in truth be termed the 'Painted Chamber' as it is adorned with pictures of battles in which the two generals were engaged, and executed on the *chunam* walls by native artists." See William Barr, *Journal of a March from Delhi to Peshawar and from thence to Cabul, including Travels in the Punjab*, London, 1844, pp. 77–80. The paintings, if extant, have been whitewashed over.
 - 27 Karl Alexander von Huegel, *Travels in Kashmir and the Panjab, containing a particular account of the Government and Character of the Sikhs*, London: J. Petheram, 1845, p. 283.
 - 28 Letter dated 26 August 1849, OIOC, Mss. Eur. F. 85/107, p. 158.
 - 29 Letter dated 3 May 1849, OIOC, Mss. Eur. F. 85/107, p. 116. Flexibility of room function was a feature of British colonial settlement in India. This has been discussed as it relates to Calcutta houses by Swati Chattopadhyay, "Blurring Boundaries: The Limits of 'White Town' in Colonial Calcutta," *JSAH*, vol. 59, no. 2, June 2000, pp. 154 ff.
 - 30 Quoted in Maud Diver, *Honoraria Lawrence: A Fragment of Indian History*, London: John Murray, 1936, p. 374.
 - 31 The new cantonment was in use by 1855.
 - 32 See William Jack Glover, "Making Lahore Modern: Urban Form and Social Practice in Colonial Punjab, 1849–1920," Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1999, for a full discussion of the development of the city.
 - 33 See James L. Wescoat Jr. in Sajjad Kausar, Michael Brand and James L. Wescoat Jr. (eds), *Shalamar Garden, Lahore: Landscape, Form and Meaning*, Karachi: Pakistan Department of Archaeology, 1990, p. 54.
 - 34 Quoted by Wescoat in Kausar, Brand and Wescoat, *Shalamar Garden*, p. 14.
 - 35 Punjab Provincial Archives of Pakistan, Press List #10.
 - 36 See *Early Nineteenth-Century Punjab*, p. 116. The manuscript includes names of many gardens.
 - 37 Ibid., p. 147, and Glover, "Making Lahore Modern," p. 41.
 - 38 See Muhammad Waliullah Khan, *Governor's House, Lahore*, Lahore: Department of Information and Culture, 1983, chapter 3, for an argument that it is the tomb of Qasim Khan mentioned in the *Tahqiqat Chisti*. This Qasim Khan had been a *subedar* (governor) of Kabul, where he had died in 1600. His body had then been brought to Lahore for burial, and on this basis the tomb can be dated to about 1610. But the occupant of the tomb is by no means certain. In Anis Naji, *Ancient Lahore*, p. 52, it is said to be the tomb of Mir Ismael. On a British-period map of 1868, the site is marked "Tomb of Syud

- Noordeen [unreadable] Bookharee, known as Jamadar Kooshal Singh's Kothee, and now used as Government House." The nineteenth-century historian Kanhayya Lal gives it to Syed Badr-ud-Din Gillani.
- 39 Latif, *Lahore*, p. 296, also notes that there was a *mohalla* or neighbourhood of the same name to the west of the tomb site.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Letter from the Secretary of the Board of Administration, Lahore division, 24 October 1850, Punjabi Provincial Archives of Pakistan, ser. 650, ref. 37, #1498.
- 42 T. H. Thornton and John Lockwood Kipling, *Lahore*, Lahore: Civil Secretariat Press, 1876, p. 29.
- 43 See William Sleeman, *Rambles and Reflections*, London, 1844, p. 216, for an account of the murder.
- 44 The primary source for this building is an illustrated manuscript known as The Delhie Book, published in part as *The Golden Calm*, New York: Viking, 1980. See also Nalini Thakur, "Mehrauli, Delhi," *A & D*, vol. 6, no. 1, November 1989, 95–104, for a short contextual analysis of the surrounding landscape.
- 45 Quoted in John Lawrence and Audrey Woodiwiss (eds), *The Journals of Honoria Lawrence*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980.
- 46 This was a two-part structure with a tomb section built in 1658 and an adjacent mosque in 1716. In 1848 the British built a wall between the two. The mosque would later be converted into the Attorney General's offices. Today it is used as private chambers by the lawyers of the Directorate of Archaeology of the Punjab.
- 47 Letter dated 7 September 1849, OIOC, Mss. Eur. f. 85/107, p. 160.
- 48 Letter from Harry to Alick, 23 March, 1850, OIOC, Mss. Eur. f. 85/107, p. 275. *Kashi* is a decorative layer of glass fused onto hard plaster.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 OIOC, Mss. Eur. f. 85/107, p. 271.
- 51 OIOC, Mss. Eur. f. 85/107, p. 334. The letter was written on Christmas Day, 1851.
- 52 See Mark Bence-Jones, *Palaces of the Raj*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1973, chapter 10, for the later history of Governor's House.
- 53 The recent but short-lived creation of an Agra Presidency (in 1834), and its subsequent demotion to a Lieutenant-Governorship, had involved a closely fought negotiation for allowances and symbols of prestige by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the first Lieutenant Governor there. As discussed in Shorto, "Public Lives," chapter 5.
- 54 See Jill Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan, 1835–1914*, London: Routledge, 1978, for an analysis of the changes to British house plans. Art-historical considerations of the reaction against industrialization in Europe also often stress the retreat to private life, though there have been no specific studies, previously, of how this was transposed to a colonial context. [Editors' note: see Swati Chattopadhyay's analysis of the colonial-modern "garden houses" of the Bengali elite, in the next chapter.]
- 55 See Chattopadhyay, "Blurring Boundaries," for discussion.
- 56 In a sense these were a continuation of the tradition of separate eighteenth-century British Indian banqueting halls. Banqueting halls were used well into the nineteenth century in places where prestige was of particular political importance to the British, such as at the Residency complex in Lucknow.
- 57 OIOC, Mss. Eur. f. 85/107.
- 58 "The incised and moulded decoration of the alcoves in the central hall has been coloured with good effect, and the walls have been decorated with fresco designs after those of the mosque of Wazir Khan under the superintendence of Colonel Hyde, RE." Thornton and Kipling, *Lahore*, p. 83.
- 59 Mahrukh Tarapor, "John Lockwood Kipling and the Arts and Crafts Movement in India," *AA Files*, no. 3, January 1983, 13–21.

- 60 See Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, pp. 160–6. Kipling himself lamented, “Not a single native draftsman ... has been taught the architecture of the country,” *Journal of Indian Art*, no. 3, 1884.
- 61 These included the mosque of Wazir Khan and Dai Anga’s mosque. Both structures have particularly rich and intricate painted decorations, and their designs were recorded in intricate architectural studies by the students. Examples can be found in the Lahore Museum, and in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Dai Anga’s mosque (also known as the Mosque of Maqbul) had been under close observation as it, too, was used as a British dwelling. See Thornton and Kipling, *Lahore*, for discussion.
- 62 Similar paneling can be seen in the dining room at Barnes Court in Simla, the summer house of the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. Kipling designed interiors for this very different-looking hybrid – part half-timbered Tudor Revival and part Himachal Pradesh vernacular – in the early 1890s.
- 63 Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, pp. 160–6.
- 64 *The Builder*, 10 September 1870, 723, cited in Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 59. [Editors’ note: Chisholm had altered and extended the existing palace building which had been designed a century earlier in a similar but more amateurish “Saracenic” manner by another Englishman, probably Paul Bentley, in the service of the Muslim prince of Arcot: see Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, p. 59. See also P. Davies, *Spendours of the Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660–1947*, London: John Murray, 1985, pp. 196–7; and Paul Walker’s discussion of the ambiguities of this case in the preceding chapter of the present volume.]
- 65 Secretary of the Government of India to Secretary to the Board of Administration, Punjab, Punjabi Provincial Archives of Pakistan, ser. 772, Proceedings, week of 26 April 1851.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. 108; Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, Princeton University Press, 1996, pp. 119–27.
- 68 Cannadine, *Rise and Fall*, p. 50. This behavior can be traced back to the seventeenth-century. See Shorto, “Public Lives,” chapter 2, for references to ceremonial in Surat.
- 69 For an understanding of the changing placement, form and function of Mughal gardens in Lahore I am indebted to the work of James L. Wescoat Jr., in particular the article “Gardens, Urbanisation and Urbanism in Mughal Lahore, 1526–1657,” in Wescoat and Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), *Mughal Gardens: Sources, Places, Representations and Prospects*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996, pp. 139 ff. To the best of my knowledge, there has not yet been an analysis of Sikh landscapes.
- 70 James Wescoat, “Gardens versus Citadels: The Territorial Context of Early Mughal Gardens,” in John Dixon Hunt (ed.), *Garden History: Issues, Approaches, Methods*. Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1994, pp. 331 ff.
- 71 Wescoat, in Wescoat and Wolschke-Bulmahn, *Mughal Gardens*, p. 159.
- 72 Canning papers, lodged in the West Yorkshire Archives.

Chapter 9: The Other Face of Primitive Accumulation

- 1 I wish to thank Gautam Bhadra for conversation on the subject; Indrajit Chaudhuri, Gautam Basu Mallick and Tithi Chanda for making it possible to visit several extant garden houses; and the National Library, Calcutta, for giving me permission to document the main library building. I am grateful to the British Library for giving me permission to reproduce images from its collection in this essay. Unless cited, all translations from Bengali are by the present author.
- 2 Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Samuel Beer (ed.), Arlington Heights, Ill.: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1955, pp. 13–14.

- 3 Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1, New York: The Modern Library, 1906, p. 786.
- 4 Ibid., p. 787.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 801–2.
- 6 My point here concerns the link with *industrial* capitalism, which produced results very different from one in Britain.
- 7 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, pp. 18–22.
- 8 Whether in Bengal or in other parts of India, the mobilization of the peasantry and the working classes was seen by the nationalist elite as fraught with danger, a threat to their own authority, even when such mobilization was deemed necessary for the nationalist movement.
- 9 Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of the Permanent Settlement* [1963], Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996, p. 8.
- 10 Sugata Bose, *Peasant Labour and Colonial Capital (New Cambridge History of India)*, Cambridge and New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 71.
- 11 Guha, *A Rule of Property*, p. 32.
- 12 Ibid., p. 107.
- 13 Ibid., p. 110.
- 14 Ibid., p. 44.
- 15 Ibid., p. 199.
- 16 Partha Chatterjee, *Bengal: the Land Question*, Calcutta: K. P. Bagchi, 1985, p. 15.
- 17 Ibid., p. 7.
- 18 Ibid., p. 11.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 In Bengali the saying is as follows: *Pube hansh, pashime bansh, uttore gola, dakshin kholā* – ducks (pond) on the east, bamboo grove on the west, grain store on the north, open on the south.
- 21 One beegah is approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ acre (0.13 ha).
- 22 W. S. Seton Karr, *The Selections from Calcutta Gazettes*, vol. III, p. 566. *Pucka* or *pucka*-built implies masonry construction.
- 23 In 1784, the Auriol family's garden house in Alipore was described as one with a superior state of cultivation, and "being lately furnished with a fresh supply of Cape seeds of the best assortment, and in the highest preservation ever yet received." Ibid., vol. I, p. 46.
- 24 For example, see the advertisement from 1784; *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 39.
- 25 Ibid., vol. I, p. 117.
- 26 An advertisement dated 22 May 1794 provided the following: "to be let at Bandel, a pucka built upper-room house ... with a park for deer, *walled and railed all round*" (emphasis mine); *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 577.
- 27 For an explanation of the three-bay pattern, see Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism, and the Colonial Uncanny*, London: Routledge, 2005, chapter 2.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Seton Karr, *Selections*, vol. III, pp. 435–6.
- 30 Ibid., p. 436.
- 31 C. E. Buckland, *Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors*, vol. II, Calcutta: Lahiri and Company, 1901, pp. 1019–20.
- 32 Ibid., p. 1019.
- 33 Jeremy Losty, *Calcutta: City of Palaces*, London: British Library, 1990, p. 80.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid., p. 81.
- 36 In 1836 Forlong was placed in charge of Mulnath, then belonging to Messrs Hills and White. In 1856 he left Mulnath to manage the indigo concern in Nischindapur for

- James Hills and Company, where he was located during the Indigo Revolt. Mulnath had been sold to the Bengal Indigo Company, the largest indigo concern in Bengal. Blair B. Kling, *The Blue Mutiny*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966, pp. 26, 59–60.
- 37 As Sugata Bose explains: "In the Nishindapur concern in Nadia, out of 864 peasants planting 3,300 acres with indigo, a mere 110 had no outstanding balances, while in the Mulnath concern the lucky number was 237 out of 1,378. Unpaid balances mounted over generations to astronomical figures which no indigo peasant could hope to redeem;" *Peasant Labour and Colonial Capital*, p. 48.
- 38 Kling, *The Blue Mutiny*, *passim*.
- 39 Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983, pp. 69, 314.
- 40 It is relevant to mention here that the planters' protest against Dinabandhu Mitra's play on the Indigo Revolt, *Nildarpan* (1859), was framed around the depiction of an attempted rape of a peasant woman by a European planter at his *nilkuthi*.
- 41 See Kling, *The Blue Mutiny*.
- 42 Colesworthey Grant, *Rural Life in Bengal: Illustrative of Anglo-Indian Suburban Life*, London: Thacker and Company, 1865, pp. 33–4.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 46 Bose, *Peasant Labour and Colonial Capital*, p. 118.
- 47 Grant, *Rural Life in Bengal*.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 49 *Ibid.*, pp. 101–2.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 50.
- 51 Wills and Probate Inventories in the collection of the OIOC, British Library, L/AG/34/27/165, 9 February 1860.
- 52 Grant, *Rural Life in Bengal*, pp. 100–102.
- 53 Abanindranath Tagore, "Jorasankor Dhare," *Abanindra Rachanabali*, vol. 1, Calcutta: Prakash Bhavan, 1973, pp. 221–6.
- 54 Kaliprasanna Sinha, *Satik Hutom Penchar Naksha*, Arun Nag (ed.), Calcutta: Subarnorekha, 1980, p. 9.
- 55 See, for example, Romesh Chandra Dutta's novel *Samsaar*. I discuss this example in *Representing Calcutta*, chapter 4.
- 56 Radharaman Mitra, "Kolkatar bari, bagan o baganbari," *Kalikatadarpan*, vol. 2, Calcutta: Subarnorekha, 1987, pp. 1–26. Mohanbagan Sporting Club gets its name from having started as a sporting facility in Mohanbagan villa, the garden house of Kirti Mitra.
- 57 Rabindranath Tagore, "Jibansmriti," *Rabindra Rachanabali*, vol. 9, Calcutta: Viswabharati, 1987, p. 426.
- 58 *Ibid.*, pp. 426–7.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 427.
- 60 Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, pp. 43–4.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- 63 Rabindranath Tagore, "Dui beegah jami," *Sanchayita*, Calcutta: Viswabharati, 1981, pp. 238–41.
- 64 See Dipesh Chakrabarty's discussion of this poem in *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 153.
- 65 Rabindranath Tagore, "Aikyatan," *Sanchayita*, pp. 823–6.
- 66 Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's "Denapawona" was first serialized in the literary journal *Bharatvarsha* between 1919 and 1922.

- 67 Saratchandra Chattopadhyay, "Denapawona," *Saratrachanabali*, vol. 2, Calcutta: Nath Publishing, 1994, pp. 167–8.
- 68 Lila Majumdar, "Peneti'te," and "Bhuture Bari," *Chhotoder Omnibus*, Calcutta: Asia Publishing Company, 1999. Peneti is the colloquial form of Panihati.

Chapter 10: The Trouser under the Cloth

- 1 Don Bastian, *De Soysa Charitaya*, Sinhalese edn, Colombo: Daily News Press, 1904. (English edition by V. S. M. de Mel, *The De Soysa Saga*, Colombo: Thisara Press, 1986.)
- 2 Ceylon's colonial period included Portuguese (1505–1656), Dutch (1656–1796) and British (1815–1948).
- 3 The corvée system organized society according to the service provided to the king. It was known to the Sinhalese as *Rajakariya*. Under the British, a plantation industry for the large-scale production of tea, rubber and coconut transformed the local economy.
- 4 Michael Roberts, *Caste Conflict and Elite Formation: The Rise of a Karave Elite in Sri Lanka 1500–1931*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- 5 Michael Roberts, Ismeth Raheem and Percy Colin-Thomé, *People Inbetween: The Burghers and the Middle Class in the Transformations within Sri Lanka, 1790s–1960s*, vol. 1, Colombo: Sarvodaya Book Publishing Services, 1989, p. 27.
- 6 Ibid. In reference to the title of the same book, Roberts's discussion refers to ideas of cultural production and symbolic capital in Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- 7 Bevis Bawa, "The Colombo of those days and these," in *Briefly by Bevis*, Colombo: The Sapumal Foundation, 1985, pp. 62–3. Bevis himself was a Eurasian, the brother of the architect Geoffrey Bawa and served as the aide de camp to the Governor.
- 8 Roberts, "Caste among the Sinhalese," *Caste Conflict*, pp. 36–74.
- 9 Michael Roberts, "The Rise of the Karaves," *Ceylon Studies Seminar*, 68/69, series no. 5, 1969.
- 10 Ibid., caste listings compared between *Janavamsa*, probably fifteenth century, and Census of Ceylon 1824.
- 11 Roberts, *People Inbetween*, p. 104.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Arnold Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, London: Lloyds Greater Publishing Company, 1907.
- 14 Roberts, *Caste Conflict*, pp. 76–97.
- 15 Roberts, *People Inbetween*, p. 3.
- 16 Roberts, *Caste Conflict*, p. 273, in reference to Spence Hardy, *Jubilee Memorial of the Wesleyan Mission, South Ceylon, 1814–1854*, Colombo: Wesleyan Press, 1864.
- 17 Wright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, p. 538.
- 18 Joe Jayasuriya, "London Baas from Moratuwa, from the Handbook and Catalogue of the Ceylon Court, 1886," *Weekend* (newspaper, Sri Lanka), Sunday, 25 January 1987.
- 19 The resolutions demanded the election by vote of presidents of village tribunals rather than nomination by the state; *Walawwa* – Sinhalese name for the residence of the headman of a village.
- 20 Nira Wickramasinghe, "Some Comments of Dress in Sri Lanka," *The Thatched Patio*, (publ. Colombo: International Center for Ethnic Studies), January/February 1992, p. 1.
- 21 Roberts, *Caste Conflict*, pp. 331–5.
- 22 Kumari Jayawardene, "Cultural Assimilation of the Sri Lankan Bourgeoisie," 1993, unpublished paper, pp. 17–18.
- 23 Ibid., p. 18.

Notes ■

- 24 William Pieris, "Wedding 75 Years ago," *Sunday Observer* (Colombo), 21 February 1974.
- 25 See Michael Roberts, *Facets of Modern Ceylon History through the letters of Jeronis Pieris*, Colombo: Hansa Publishers, 1975. In Roberts's analysis of letters, it appears that Jeronis Pieris's mother always communicated with him in Sinhalese.
- 26 Charles de Soysa's will from a copy in the possession of L. S. D. Pieris.
- 27 Don Bastian, *De Soysa Charitaya*, p. 109.
- 28 Martin Wickramasinghe, *Gamperaliya*, Colombo: Thisara Press, 1944, chapter 1, translated into English by Lakshmi de Silva in "The Changing Village," unpublished.
- 29 For details of this building type, see Anthony King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*, London: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- 30 Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989, p. 55, in reference to Richard Bentley, *Life in Bombay*, London: Richard Bentley, 1852, pp. 13–15.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 32 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983, pp. 150–1.
- 33 Don Bastian, *De Soysa Charitaya*, pp. 362–72; and Amarasinghe, "Just a Bagatelle," *Sunday Observer* (Colombo), 8 July 1990.
- 34 Naming houses after games seemed to be a popular practice during that time, as in the case of Whist Bungalow, a popular haunt for whist (card) players.
- 35 Don Bastian, *De Soysa Charitaya*, pp. 362–71.
- 36 This photograph is a chrome lithograph by Vincent Day from a photograph by SLIMM and Co., Colombo. The picture is contained in John Capper, *The Duke of Edinburgh in Ceylon*, London: Provost and Co., 1871, p. 104.
- 37 Of the original fifteen, one of them, a boy, had died young.
- 38 Author, based on interview with L. S. D. Pieris, Colombo, January 2003.
- 39 Wright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*.
- 40 The "Young Ceylon" Association, for instance, was a Burgher group of early nationalists. Roberts *et al.*, *People Inbetween*, pp. 157–9.
- 41 Included in Wright, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, p. 913; it was also used by Michael Roberts for a book jacket for *Caste Conflict*.
- 42 The Lukmanji family are the current owners of Richard de Soysa's house, *Lakshmigiri*.
- 43 Author, based on interview with Rupa de Soysa, Colombo, 2 January 2004.
- 44 See Thomas Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, p. 64, for a further discussion of Chisholm's architecture. [Editor's note: see also Paul Walker's discussion of Chisholm and his Travancore style in "Institutional Audiences and Architectural Style" in the present volume.]
- 45 [Editor's note: See Figure 1.12 in chapter 1 of the present volume.]
- 46 Based on an interview with his granddaughters Sirima Wijeyesekere and Rupa de Soysa, Colombo, January 2003.
- 47 Regina *Walawwa* was purchased by the University of Colombo in 1920 as its administrative building, and is now called College House.
- 48 "Marriage of the Chilean Consul's daughter," 27 September 1917, from an unidentified newspaper account, source L. S. D. Pieris.
- 49 A long casual dress buttoned down the front.
- 50 Their complete names were Erananda Rajamani Piyasena, Sirima Mallika Yasodara, and Rupa Nalini.
- 51 Roberts, "Rise of the Karave," *Ceylon Studies Seminar*, 68/69, series no. 5, 1969, p. 27.
- 52 Kotelawala, "Nineteenth Century Elites and their Antecedents," *The Ceylon Historical Journal*, vol. 25, October 1978, 209.
- 53 Wickramasinghe, "Some Comments," p. 10.

- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid., p. 17.
- 56 Many of these public buildings, including the Protestant Cathedral in Colombo, were built by the Public Works Department.
- 57 A roof designed to have a steep central portion surrounded by a low skirt roof.
- 58 As described by Mr MacLeod Campbell in a talk broadcast in 1931 from England and reported in the *Centenary Magazine*, Trinity College, Kandy, 1972. For further information on this building see R. Mehrotra *et al.* (eds), *World Architecture, 1900–2000: A Critical Mosaic, Volume VIII: South Asia*, China Architecture and Building Press/Springer: Vienna and New York, 2000, p. 56.
- 59 The colonial Public Works Department initially built these house types in what was familiarly called the PWD style.
- 60 Douglas Meadows, *Modern Eastern Bungalows and How to Build Them*, Calcutta: Thacker's Press and Directories Ltd., 1931.
- 61 Andrew Boyd, "A Peoples' Tradition," *MARG*, vol. 1, October 1946, 25–40; Boyd published photographs with captions in "Houses by the Road," *Ceylon Observer Pictorial* (Colombo), in 1939.
- 62 See Minnette de Silva, *The Life and Work of an Asian Woman Architect*, Colombo: Smart Media Productions, 1998.
- 63 See David Robson, *Geoffrey Bawa, The Complete Works*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2003, where Bawa's career, clientele and connections to political elites are well documented.
- 64 It was a coalition of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja (People's) Party and the Communist Party under the leadership of Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, widow of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, 1970–7.

Chapter 11: Negotiated Modernities

- 1 This chapter is drawn from a more expanded discussion of the material in Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism*, London, New York, New Delhi: Routledge, 2005.
- 2 See Jyoti Hosagrahar, "Fractured Plans: Real Estate, Moral Reform, and the Politics of Housing in New Delhi, 1936–1941," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, Fall 1999; see also Stephen Legg, "Colonial Governmentality: Spaces of Imperialism and Nationalism in India's New Capital, Delhi 1911–47," London: Blackwell, forthcoming (2007).
- 3 The concept is discussed in detail in Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities*.
- 4 Dr K. S. Sethna as Medical Officer of Health of Delhi published a report included in *Report on the Administration of the Delhi Municipality for the year 1933–34*, Delhi: Municipal Press, 1934.
- 5 "Delhi the Death-Trap," *The Times of India*, 15 January 1934.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Officials blamed the entrenched traditional systems for the failure of the new: "The Health Officer is greatly handicapped in pushing forward the introduction of the water borne system on account of the 'Customary sweepers.' The Municipality will have to educate public opinion, and take steps to introduce the water borne system as soon as practicable." *Public Health Report of the Delhi Province*, Delhi: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1931, pp. 26–7.
- 8 According to official reports by 1938, "The outdoor building staff of the Committee consists of one Building Superintendent who is in charge of the staff, 4 Naib-Tahsildars, 9 Building Inspectors and 17 Building Jamadars. Of these one Inspector, 2 Jamadars and a gang of 4 persons is on constant duty of demolition." *Report on the Administration of*

the Delhi Municipality 1938–39, vol. I, *General Administration*, Delhi: Municipal Press, 1939, pp. 32–3.

- 9 *Report on the Administration of the Delhi Municipality 1938–39*, op. cit., p. 32.
 - 10 Ibid., p. 32.
 - 11 Ibid.
 - 12 Ibid.
 - 13 Bribes and clandestine payments were often couched under the euphemism of a gift to gain social “goodwill.”
 - 14 *Report on the Administration of the Delhi Municipality 1929–30*, vol. I, *General Administration*, Delhi: Municipal Press, 1930, pp. 44–5.
 - 15 A. P. Hume, *Report on the Relief of Congestion in Delhi*, vols I and II, Simla: Government of India Press, 1936; Delhi Improvement Trust, *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust, 1936–39*, New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1939, p. 2.
 - 16 *Final Report of the Delhi Town Planning Committee on the Town Planning of the New Imperial Capital*, Delhi: Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1913, p. 2.
 - 17 In 1933 R. B. Whitehead, an officer of the colonial government, published a report on the conditions, extent and management of the Crown Lands (i.e. *nazul* lands or lands escheated from the Mughal king on his defeat), along with his recommendations. This report was instrumental in the setting-up of the DIT. R. B. Whitehead, *Report on the Administration of Delhi Crown Lands*, Delhi: Oxford Printing Works, 1933.
 - 18 *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust*, p. 6.
 - 19 As far back as 1925 the Municipal Committee raised the question of extending the Town Improvement Act (Act IV of 1922) and the formation of a Town Improvement Trust in accordance with it. In so doing the stated objectives of the Committee were:
 - a) The improvement of certain areas in the city known as bastis in which persons belonging to an inferior social order and especially the class known as untouchables are residing. Some of these bastis are not fit for human habitation. They consist of a number of few thatched houses, from which sun and air seem to have been deliberately excluded. The lanes are narrow and no sanitary arrangements in them, under the present circumstances are possible. The Committee considered that it would be in the public interest to acquire a few of these bastis and to provide housing accommodation for this class under more congenial circumstances elsewhere.
 - b) The widening of streets where necessary. There are certain lanes, which are less than 3 feet wide with double and three storeyed houses abutting on either side of it. In some of them it is difficult for 2 persons to walk abreast.
 - c) The acquisition of certain undeveloped areas in the city to provide sanitary tenements of reasonable rent for middle classes.
 - d) The provision of open spaces in the interests of the residents of various localities.
 - e) The securing and reservation of plots of land for the grazing of milch cattle.
 - f) The provision of a proper system of drains and sewers.
- Report on the Administration of the Delhi Municipality for the year 1935–36*, vol. I, *General Administration*, Delhi: Municipal Press, 1936, p. 52.
- 20 Ibid., p. 48. By 1935, the idea of scientific town planning to prevent the growth of disorganized and unsanitary suburbs had taken root. In Punjab, for instance, a Town Planning Engineer was appointed for the purpose. See *The Statesman*, 21 June 1935.
 - 21 A. P. Hume, “A Preliminary Note on the Problem of Congestion in Delhi,” dated 11 September 1935, Chief Commissioner’s Office, Delhi, p. 6, Delhi State Archives.
 - 22 British officials saw some cultural/ethnic/caste groups such as Gujar and Ranghar as having a “habit of thieving” and of “cattle-lifting.” *A Gazetteer of Delhi*, Delhi: Vintage, 1988. First published as *Gazetteer of the Delhi District 1883–84*, compiled and published under the authority of the Punjab Government, 1884.

- 23 Since the rehousing was often delayed, unserved, inadequate (and therefore high-density), and in environmentally poor locations, they created new "slums."
- 24 Hume, *Report on the Relief of Congestion in Delhi*, vols I and II. Hume's report submitted in 1936 proved instrumental to the setting-up of the Delhi Improvement Trust.
- 25 Hume, *Report on the Relief of Congestion in Delhi*, vol. I. Hume's figures for density were remarkably different from the Health Report of 1931 (see Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities*, Table 6, p. 151).
- 26 Hume, *Report on the Relief of Congestion in Delhi*, vol. I, p. 10. Hume also notes that in a "D" class orthodox clerk's quarter in New Delhi the living space amounted to a fifth of the total area of the house. This was less generous than what Hume himself proposed.
- 27 The DIT's architectural section prepared layouts of Basti Arakashan, the Roshanara Extension, and Shadipur town expansion layouts among others. "On streets where a standard design and elevation was considered necessary, these were enforced by the Trust through the lease. Elsewhere, as in the purely residential parts of Daryaganj, only horizontal heights and building lines have been prescribed." *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 Delhi Improvement Trust, *Building Bye-Laws for Trust Extra Municipal Areas*, New Delhi: Author, 1944.
- 30 *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust*, pp. 33–34.
- 31 See papers in New File # 9/1914 at the Delhi State Archives. This law was modified for the purposes of the Trust. Under the schedule to the Trust Law an important modification of the Land Acquisition Act relates to assessment of market value, whereby market value is to be determined according to the use to which the land was being put on the date of the relevant notification. *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust*, pp. 30–1.
- 32 *Report on the Administration of the Delhi Municipality for the year 1936–37*, 1937.
- 33 *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust*.
- 34 For instance, the total amount that the DIT expended in 1939–40 was Rs. 60,897, a mere 2% of the annual income of Rs. 32,20,014. In 1940–41 the Trust expended Rs. 9,34,871, or 79% of an income of Rs. 11,76,473. *Administration Report of the DIT for the years 1939–1941*, 1942, Annexure V.
- 35 Letter #30-M from A. P. Hume, Officer on Special Duty attached to the Delhi Administration, New Delhi, dated 14 March 1936, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi. New File #122/B/1935 (Delhi State Archives).
- 36 For details see, for instance, "Copy of the proceedings of the Conference held on the 13th September, 1935," by M. W. Yeatts, Chief Commissioner, Delhi. Chief Commissioner's Office, New File #122/B/1935 (Delhi State Archives), p.1.
- 37 "That such speculation already exists is shown by the fact that some of the most suitable building land in the Khanpur village area has already been sold. For instance, a contractor of the Agricultural Institute has bought 3 bighas at Rs. 100/- per bigha and has already built a shop. A contractor of the Forest Department has bought 25 bighas at the rate of about Rs. 400/- an acre, and has already erected a brick wall round the area. It seems a pity, if there is any likelihood of Government agreeing to the acquisition of these lands – in my opinion most suitable for Delhi Expansion – that we should allow the market to be spoiled for the sake of a simple notification under section 4." Letter #4 from A. P. Hume, Officer on Special Duty attached to the Delhi Administration to the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi Division, dated, 10/11 February 1936. Commissioner's Office, Delhi Division. New File #122/B/1935/R & A (Delhi State Archives).
- 38 In March 1936, Hume observed, "[a]lready last September it was apparent that in the area covered by what is known as the 'Municipal Northern City Extension Scheme,' " as well as in other land in the immediate vicinity of the scheme and outside municipal limits, speculation in land was going on. The northern City Extension scheme was

started about 1932, since when numerous sales of land in and around the area, and also I understand some fictitious transfers have taken place. Until last year speculation was not serious, since the immediate prospect of extensive development on this side was still indefinite." Letter #30-M from A. P. Hume, Officer on Special Duty attached to the Delhi Administration, New Delhi, dated 14 March 1936. Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi. New File #122/B/1935 (Delhi State Archives).

39 Ibid.

40 *Report of the First Three Year Programme of the Delhi Improvement Trust*, p. 25, also Annexure VIII.

41 See Sir Patrick Abercrombie's "Greater London Plan," 1944, in which plans and policy for the decentralization of London were developed.

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2.1	James Fergusson, <i>History of Indian and Eastern Architecture</i> , London: John Murray, 1899 (1st edn 1876), fig. 43, p. 109
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- 5.5 *Journal of Indian Art*, vol. 14, no. 117, January 1912
- 5.6 W. E. Gladstone Solomon, *The Bombay Revival of Indian Art*,
Bombay: The Times Press, [1923]
- 5.9 Frederic Salmon Growse, *Indian Architecture of to-day as
exemplified in new buildings*, Allahabad: N. W. Province and
Oudh Govt. Pr., 1885–6
- 5.10 Richard Strachey, *Report of a Committee on the Classification
of Public Works Expenditure and the Various Returns Exhibiting
the Operations of the Department which are required by the
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1957, p. 87
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- 9.1 James Moffat, *View on the Banks of the Hooghly near
Calcutta, the Country Residence of William Farquharson Esqr.*,
Calcutta, 1800
- 9.2–9.3 Portions of Aaron Upjohn's Map of Calcutta and its Suburbs
- 9.4 Portion of Lottery Committee Map of Calcutta, 1825–32
- 9.5–9.6 Swati Chattopadhyay
- 9.7 Aaron Upjohn's plan of 1792–3
- 9.8 Detail of Lottery Committee Plan of Calcutta, 1825–32
- 9.9 Drawing by author
- 9.10, 9.11 Courtesy OIOC, British Library
- 9.12 Edmund Hawke Locker, *The Governor General's Villa at
Barrackpore*, 1808. Courtesy OIOC, British Library
- 9.13 James Baille Fraser, *A View of Barrackpore House, 1819. Views
of Calcutta and its Environs*
- 9.14 Blair Kling, *The Blue Mutiny*
- 9.15–9.18 Colesworthey Grant, *Rural Life in Bengal* (1865)
- 9.19 Simm's Map of Calcutta, 1852–6

- 9.20 Courtesy Indrajit Chowdhury
- 10.1 L. S. D. Pieris
- 10.2 Don Bastian, *De Soysa Charitaya*, Sinhalese edition, Colombo: Daily News Press, 1904, p. 109
- 10.3 John Capper, *The Duke of Edinburgh in Ceylon*, London: Provost and Co., 1871, facing p. 101
- 10.4 Ibid., p. 104
- 10.5 Arnold Wright (ed.), *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, London: Lloyds Greater Publishing Company, 1907, p. 913
- 10.6 Anoma Pieris
- 10.7 Chandrani Wijesekere
- 10.8 Ayndri de Soysa
- 11.1, 11.5, 11.9 Jyoti Hosagrahar
- 11.2 Jyoti Hosagrahar, based on British Library, Map Box 79, 1930
- 11.3, 11.8 Shiv Someshwar
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